DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 036 814

CG 004 960

AUTHOR	Butterworth, Thomas W.
TITLE	A Guide to the Evaluation of Pupil Progress with Particular Emphasis on Pupil Marks. Pupil Personnel Study Series, 1966--1967. Report Number One.
INSTITUTION	Los Angeles County Superintendent of Schools, Calif.
PUB DATE	Aug 66
NOTE	69p.
EDRS PRICE	EDRS Price MF-$0.50 HC-$3.55
DESCRIPTORS	*Achievement, *Achievement Rating, Educational Diagnosis, *Pupil Personnel Services, *Student Evaluation, Student Records, *Students

ABSTRACT

The study evaluated pupil progress with particular emphasis on pupil marks. The report is divided into seven sections: (1) introduction, (2) statement of the problem, (3) historical overview of marks and marking systems, (4) present practices, (5) assumptions commonly held about school marks, (6) an analysis of these assumptions, and (7) summary and conclusions. Satisfactory evaluation of pupil progress is determined by the extent to which it can assist students attain the goals of their educational experience. The evaluation should not compare one student to another but should stimulate the student toward future education to reach his goal in life. (Author/MC)

ED0 36814

Office of Los Angeles County Superintendent of Schools
Division of Research and Pupil Personnel Services

Pupil Personnel Study Series

1966 - 67

Report Number 1

A GUIDE TO THE EVALUATION OF PUPIL PROGRESS WITH PARTICULAR EMPHASIS ON PUPIL MARKS

Prepared by Thomas W. Butterworth
Consultant
Division of Research and Pupil Personnel Services

August, 1966

CG004960

ED036814

Los Angeles County Superintendent of Schools
Division of Research and Guidance

A GUIDE TO THE EVALUATION OF PUPIL PROGRESS WITH PARTICULAR EMPHASIS ON PUPIL MARKS

SECTION I

Introduction

"The world of educators faces a dilemma. The talk of the educational world is indicated by such titles as 'Report Blues,' 'Riddle of the Report Card,' 'Grade Getting,' and 'Grade Mania.' In the secondary schools, grading and grade getting become a recurring thorn. No one is certain precisely what is being measured by grades. Many are uneasy about the tangled reasons for assigning grades. Yet students and parents grow increasingly frenzied about securing top grades as a means of impressing college admission offices. Thoughtful people wonder how such preoccupation with measurement and evaluation really serves the end of education. In the last 50 years, much experimentation and research has been done in an effort to alleviate the frustration and difficulty in marking." (14:8)

It seems apparent that much of the research referred to by Bernard purportedly done to alleviate the problems in marking has not reaped great rewards. This is attested to by Smith and Dobbin (99:789) in the 1960 edition of the Encyclopedia of Educational Research: "Although research has uncovered some limitations and suggested some promising directions in marking procedure, no commonly accepted system has emerged from half a century of inquiry. Perhaps the development of such a system awaits wider agreement on the goals of instruction but more importantly perhaps the purpose of marking." Without doubt it is this lack of common agreement on not only the purposes of marking but on the wider outcomes of education that has created so much confusion in the minds of both the public and some segments of the profession. In spite of our knowledge of the principles of evaluation and an increased understanding of the learning process this lack of agreement on purposes has effectively blocked any serious study and meaningful change in marking practices.

It is quite possible that marks in their first use in the schools did not have the same significance that they have in the mind of the public today.

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH, EDUCATION & WELFARE
OFFICE OF EDUCATION

THIS DOCUMENT HAS BEEN REPRODUCED EXACTLY AS RECEIVED FROM THE PERSON OR ORGANIZATION ORIGINATING IT. POINTS OF VIEW OR OPINIONS STATED DO NOT NECESSARILY REPRESENT OFFICIAL OFFICE OF EDUCATION POSITION OR POLICY.

William H. Burton (20:657) indicates that "the school, with its formal lifeless curriculum and its poor teaching methods, has got into such a fix that a marking system had to be invented to make pupils work." Whether this indeed was the result of a lifeless curriculum or not it has unhappily become one of the major functions of marks in today's schools.

A former objective of elementary and particularly secondary education was to select the few who demonstrated appropriate talents for advanced education. Marks were a possible means of performing such selection. However, under the more democratic and expanded function of today's schools the purpose of the school is not to eliminate or select certain youngsters, but to provide an adequate and effective school experience for all youngsters to prepare them for competent citizenship in today's society. Unfortunately, there are some who still feel that the school should perform such classification and selection and marks are a handy means to this end.

Paralleling this expansion of the role of the school into providing a comprehensive education for all the youngsters of all of the people has been the continuing emphasis on bringing the student's family into the school and into full participation in the educational enterprise. One aspect of this participation has been related to the process of evaluating the pupil's progress in his school experience. Part of this process of evaluation has been that of reporting the progress a student is making in his school experience both to himself and to his parents. Marks or grades have come to be seen as one aspect of the total process of evaluation in that they are one means of reporting this progress to students and to parents. In this sense marks have been used as an attempt to fulfill the "feedback" or "knowledge of results" phase in pursuing the school's goals as this relates to a student growing to understand himself (his strengths, weaknesses, and how he might most effectively use them).

There are of course a number of other purposes which marks have come to serve. It is ironic that today with our advanced knowledge of human behavior, of the learner and the learning process and of the relation of the student to the process of evaluation that we still must contend with this problem of school marks. It is indeed as if we were caught on the horns of a dilemma. There seems to be a growing body of evidence which suggests that for a person to be able to make creative, wise choices, and better decisions--in other words be a better learner--he should be free of the imposing threat of externally imposed evaluation. In the face of this we still seem to feel that external, competitive marks are a necessary aspect of the educational process.

It has been said that little of real significance from educational research gets into the mainstream of the educational enterprise. School practice seems almost always to be far behind research findings. Sociologists describe these practices or "formal patterns" of culture as conventionalized, traditional patterns of behavior which yield to change very begrudingly, if at all. Many times this can exist in the face of overwhelming evidence in favor of change. This kind of illogical behavior so characteristic of individuals seems then to affect a whole body of people, the public or even many segments of the profession. This seems particularly true with reference to the practices followed in marking student progress.

In this paper, as we begin to look at some of the characteristics of marks and analyze some of the assumptions commonly held about marks it might be good to do this against the background of what are generally seen as the four major functions of marks. These functions or purposes are typically considered to be the following: (1) the administrative function, which is to provide data for use in promotion, transfer, and graduation; (2) the informational function which is to inform the child and his parents concerning his progress toward the goals of the educational program; (3) the guidance function which is to identify the areas of special ability and disability as a basis for realistic self-appraisal and future planning; (4) the motivational function which is to stimulate the pupil to increased efforts toward maximum achievement.

As we examine the dimensions and uses of marks it is well to see them in relation to the larger and more encompassing process of evaluation in education. Evaluation, of course, is an integral part of education and is important because it focuses attention on the goals of education. Evaluation must be as broad as the purposes of education.

The basic purpose of evaluation is the improvement of learning. The reporting of pupil progress is an integral part of the evaluative process of gathering and weighing evidence that will reveal changes in the behavior of pupils as they progress through school. Until the school identifies its objectives clearly in terms of what it wants boys and girls to do as a result of their learning experiences no procedure, practice, or form used in reporting can be adequate. A community, of course, must also concur on these objectives with the professional staff, but it is particularly important that the individual teachers identify the immediate objectives for their particular classes. The teacher then must determine how nearly the learnings of each pupil approach the stated objectives. In this task she has traditionally faced the necessity of summarizing this progress and reducing this summary to a symbol. The authors of Evaluating Pupil Progress (23:190) point out that summarizing many different kinds of strengths, weaknesses, and abilities into a single symbol of achievement is not unlike the fallacious notion that a single IQ can represent many diverse abilities such as verbal, numerical, abstract reasoning, and others.

One of the most significant impressions immediately gained by reading the literature on school marks and marking systems is the virtual unanimous agreement among professionals that marks are essentially bad and that we must work to gradually alter them. A few say that we must abolish them. Rothney (93:8) says "they seem likely to continue to be the principal basis for the honor awards, promotion, and placement in schools for a long time to come. Parents will accept them for the basic evaluative device. Since marks are likely to be with us for some time, classroom teachers will want to recognize the limitations of school marks and to examine methods that may be used to improve them. While doing so they will be experimenting with procedures which may eventually make obsolete the school mark as we now know it."

The task of this paper is to explore the various dimensions of one aspect of evaluating pupil progress; the manner and means of symbolically conveying the meaning of such progress by the use of pupil marks. It is to be hoped that by identifying some of the dominant problems which have evolved in the use of pupil marks and marking systems, tracing the history of the development of marks, looking at some of the present practices, exploring the commonly held assumptions underlying the use of marks, and critically analyzing these assumptions that school personnel might be better equipped to develop implications for their own practice and to utilize marks along with other methods of reporting pupil progress to effectively promote the educational development of the students in their schools.

It will not be the conscious intent of the author to propose a "packaged" marking system, a particular model report card, or ideal procedure. These must come through careful study of the unique characteristics and needs of the children in the local school district set against the referrant of the predominant philosophical and value system of the parents in the community.

SECTION II

Statement of the Problem

What is the central core of the problem of using marks in the public schools today? The central issue is undoubtedly related to the emerging role of the school in a democratic culture and the conception held of the relationship of the student to that enterprise. The school has moved from a narrow task of educating a selected segment of our population along rather narrowly conceived academic lines to a comprehensive task of providing broad experiences for all the children of all the people in order that they may ultimately be prepared to be effective, fully participating citizens in our society. In this task the school is no respecter of race, color, sex, prior background, talent, or any pupil characteristic one can think of. It is comprehensive in scope and universal in application. And yet, Faunce and Clute (39:265) suggest that in one aspect--that of selecting or eliminating certain students by the use of symbol marks--we are attacking the very foundation of the comprehensive secondary school and violating directly or indirectly nearly every function assigned to general education. They say that this selection and elimination process is contradicted by almost every statement of purposes of secondary education published by leaders in education since 1920. "The only constructive place in our society for youth is in school. The effort to eliminate many of our youth from the schools because their achievement in certain academic areas is considered by some teachers to be below an arbitrary standard is unworthy of a great country. More seriously, such elimination increases our problems of delinquency and reduces our national goal of literate citizenship." Others, of course, have said the same about the elementary school, but this process of selecting, labeling, and eliminating is more dramatically apparent at the secondary level.

Goodlad and Anderson (43:3) in discussing the benefits of the non-graded elementary school suggest that traditional practices of classifying children in school according to certain grade levels has created what they call "a myth of grade standards." This of course violates all that we know about the great differences among pupils within each classroom grouping. They suggest that the problem of setting up classroom arrangements wherein pupil and subject matter are brought together in a meaningful relationship has always been with us but the myth of the grade standard has provided a way out. "The teacher, without undue loss of self-respect could assume under the graded plan that the children more or less approximated grade level norms." The implication for marking is obvious.

Adams (2:78) feels that the difficulty in attempting to improve marking and reporting procedures lies in the fact that the object to be improved is itself fundamentally unsound. "The whole notion of giving marks and reporting them to pupils and parents may be the most vicious practice ever constituted by the educational system." He goes on to say that he knows of no piece of research which proves or even strongly advocates definite and positive contributions which marks and report cards make in the educational growth of youth. He adds of course that to remove them would be a major undertaking because the parents have been so thoroughly indoctrinated to believe that marks are an important aspect of the educational enterprise. He mentions that the only change that has really taken place to date in the improvement of marking, is that of substituting letters for percentages or in some cases numbers.

Kirkendall (64) in discussing the moral aspects of the practice says: "It creates distrust and builds barriers between the students themselves and between students and their instructors. The teachers work diligently to mark as accurately and as fairly as possible. Yet they know they can never be precisely accurate in their judgments or convey the meaning of them fully to their students. Finally they are forced to put this evaluation into a cold, impersonal letter grade which really doesn't tell the student anything about what he has accomplished or what he needs to accomplish. So the business of marking frequently ends up by destroying the relationship which has been built up during the rest of the course."

The problems of marks appear to be very extensive and multiple in nature. Some suggest that they direct students away from the true objectives of the school in their undying quest to be on the top of the heap. Thelen[*] suggests that students are not getting an education but merely "achieving" in narrowly defined limits with school marks paving the way. "The purpose of learning is to gain status, symbolized in a mark, rather than to master the discipline of the subject. Good marks mean promotion and the regard of adults. Shop subjects and 'soft' teachers are the sensible route to good marks. Moreover, acceptance of capitulation by the teacher to the mark getting routine tends to free him from his professional obligation to make study meaningful in its own right." Thus, he says that pupils end up studying the teacher rather than the subject.

---

[*] Herbert A. Thelen: "The Triumph of Achievement Over Inquiry in Education," in The Elementary School Journal, Vol. 60, No. 4, January 1960.

Others point out that marks apparently have different meanings for different ability groupings. For example a given grade would mean something different in a mentally retarded class, a regular class, or a gifted class. They also apparently have little meaning from class to class, school to school, or school district to school district.

The question of standards inevitably comes up when discussing marks. What is the standard? Is it based on the student's ability? Is it based on an absolute standard as provided by the school? Is it based on a standard as arbitrarily set by the teacher? Or is it based on a wider standing in a wider populational group beyond the classroom? There are some who suggest that marking causes an overemphasis on the memory of rote facts rather than on the more significant outcomes of education such as the application of concepts. The purposes of marks too, can be very confusing because they are often quite obscure. Can the same marks serve several different purposes such as motivation, guidance, diagnosis, administration, reporting, and in a number of cases in individual classrooms that of punishment or reward for given assignments?

There seems to be a relationship between failing marks and early school leavers; failing marks and misbehavior. In many cases there is no doubt there is a high relation between failing marks and youngsters from socially and economically impoverished family backgrounds. As one person has said, "This is not a failure of the student but a failure of the school to provide an experience which is adapted to the background and experiences of these children." A number of school districts at the high school level follow a practice of putting students on probation after having attained a certain number of failing marks. After a short period (usually one semester) they would then be expelled from school. This is done allegedly for the purpose of motivating the student or attempting to get him to focus on the necessity for change. However, a cursory examination reveals that quite the opposite happens. That is, the policy becomes a one-way ticket out the front door of the school. It is particularly tragic to witness this kind of policy in operation in a socially, economically, and culturally impoverished community where youngsters come to school with a minimum level of readiness for the kinds of experiences which the typically middle class school is going to provide for them.

Some complain that the students would not do anything if marks were not used to motivate them or to provide an incentive for them to work. On the other hand others complain that because of marks students become extremely adept at developing a number of techniques in order to obtain the mark rather than through their actual accomplishment.

Teaf (105:87) decries the fact that among the many discussions that are constantly taking place in altering certain things in the school such as admissions policies, academic standards, and even discussing grades and grade requirements, there is no discussion of the function of grades in the educational process. There is no discussion either at the college or high school level. He points out the frustration of the teacher trying to be as fair and as objective as possible in grading examinations, class work, and measuring various aspects of student abilities or achievement such as originality, insight, etc. only to be forced to reduce all of this information down to a single set of numbers or letters. He expresses the futility too that teachers feel when they take a great deal of effort to communicate other things to the student such as writing on their papers, etc. when they and the institution really know that it is only the grade that counts. He asks the following appropriate questions: "How does marking affect the educational relationship between the teacher and the student? What do we really know about the effects of grades or marks on the educational process? Does grading have an adverse effect on basic intellectual development? He quotes from Oscar Hamblin who says, "By the time students carry their diplomas away they will have missed an education; that experience which by the exposure of one mind to another creates not answers but a lifetime of questions."

When we think of marks of course we must think of standards which they represent. Benezet (12) in an interesting talk entitled "Some Minority Thoughts on Standards" tells about his experience as a youngster and how many times he and his friends would jump over everything in sight because this was a rather high status activity for them. If a youngster could jump well he might be ready to take on a black iron fence in front of a certain neighbor's house in the neighborhood. But of course when he was young it represented a great hazard because some of the spikes on top could present serious harm to a person but then as he got older and grew larger the fence was much easier and he and his friends would practically disdain it because it was too easy. Unfortunately, he says, we seem to be using the iron spike fence as our standard which as he puts it is "fearsome to beginners, too easy to others, and unchanging to all." Then he goes on to add, "What about the youngster who may not necessarily be a good high jumper; he might approach the high jumping standard weighing 200 pounds with no spring in his ankles but on the other hand he has a 45-inch chest, 24-inch shoulders, and if you give him a discus he will throw it into the first row of the high school stadium. Or there might be another youngster who has no strength in in his body at all but instead he has the marked ability to see his world in orders and shapes differently from anyone in school. And he adds, "Do we fail both these boys because they can't high jump or do we find another sphere for them? Are we entering most of our college and too many of our high school students in a track meet which has only one event--call it the high jump, the discus throw, 100-yard dash, as you please." It is clear that using one or two symbols to represent a great diversity of standards is an inequitable and unfair practice.

One person has commented that by using marks we show that our concept of education is merely that of classifying students. Each time we give grades we are merely reclassifying them all over again in an apparent effort to show each student what his position is.

Others say that the parents' determination to hang on to grades is part of his effort to use his child as a status symbol.

Should marks be merely a classification by judgment of one's position or should they reveal the student's strengths and weaknesses with suggestions for improvement?

Many schools, in an effort to provide a school experience more adapted to students' differing levels of ability, have done varying degrees of ability grouping. Although there might be some question whether this type of grouping is doing what it is purported to do, the major problem as pointed out by Doak (34:246) is that of attempting to give marks which are similar in nature and often interpreted with a common meaning to youngsters who have different levels of ability in different classroom groupings. He says the whole idea of grouping by ability makes grading extremely difficult and very unfair. He adds that if youngsters on the basis of their grades are moved down from high ability groups to low ability groups because their work would tend to fall down, the same thing should apply to low ability youngsters who should have the opportunity of moving up to higher ability groups. "The attempt to balance this problem of grading ability grouping by weighting grades according to the group one is in--in other words, giving higher groups a heavier weighting than lower groups is not justified because why should children of low ability get less recognition for their efforts in achievement than those who have high ability? Is it equitable to fail to also give accelerated students recognition commensurate with their achievement?" He suggests that we actually abolish the use of marks so that learning can become the goal of all students, not grades. He says of course that there are those who will say that it is unrealistic and utter nonsense. He questions that justification of grades as motivational forces is really a universal truth. He says much of the problem is because students and parents are so very used to having grades that this very fact alone prevents them from developing new programs. "The primary task for educators is to find ways and means of replacing the false and worse than useless emphasis on grades with a meaningful quest for knowledge."

To illustrate that the professional indictment of grades or of marks is not unanimous, a recent column written by an educational leader* deplored what he called the "non-report card," which as a detailed explanation of all of Johnny's class work he suggested can't come close to the clear and easily understood A, B, C, etc., which is explained right on the card where it states that A is 90-100%, B is 80-89%, etc.

---

*Dr. Max Rafferty, "Just What About Report Cards," Los Angeles Times, November 16, 1964.

Wrinkle (113:3) in his classic study of various marks at the Campus Laboratory Research School of Colorado State College of Education at Greeley where letter markings were eliminated said, "Over the next ten years we made almost every mistake a school could make in our efforts to improve our marking and reporting practices. In rapid succession we developed and discarded innumerable detailed evaluation and report forms, check lists, and scale-type reports. We juggled symbols, S-U; H-S-U; H, M, L; and others. We accumulated thick files of anecdotal records; we tried informal letter reports. For a time we abandoned all forms of written reporting and substituted parent-teacher conferencing. We constructed elaborate cumulative record forms; we emphasized student self-evaluation. We developed still other detailed report forms and in every direction we went we came out at the same spot. If it were good, it took too much time; it wasn't practical; it wouldn't work in the public schools. And our job as a research lab school was to work out not only something we could use, it had to be equally useful in Yuma, Yampa, Teaneck, or Tacoma."

SECTION III

An Historical Overview of Marks and Marking Systems

To see the present dilemma facing us (in proper perspective) with the problem of marks it might prove helpful to trace the development of marking practices and the continuing efforts through research to make improvements.

Smith and Dobbin (99:783), in the 1960 edition of the Encyclopedia of Educational Research, comment that "the concern for systematic recording of learning progress may be described generally as two phases:

(a) The period extending roughly from 1910 to 1940, when research interest was focused mainly on the mechanical and semantic problems of marking; and

(b) The period from 1940 to the present, during which a greater interest is centered on improvement of marks in comprehensiveness and communication.

Yauch (114:50) notes a distinct difference in the type of research reported between the two periods 1941 and 1960. The research reported in 1941 in the main dealt with the attempts to statistically establish the reliability of marks, whereas the 1960 report of research consists mainly of surveys of current practices. He points out that rather than to continue in the attempt to do research as such on marks we have merely made a descriptive effort of reporting current practices almost as though we were validating these practices merely by reporting them.

Prior to 1920 marks that were used were almost wholly reported in percentages. Some schools gradually changed to letter grades. Whether they used a letter or a percentage type of reporting they varied from three to seven symbols. Inevitably, whether they were letters or percentages, the marks were required to conform to a normal curve distribution. Since these early schools were concerned almost exclusively with academic achievement the numerical or percentage grades were given in all subject matter areas.

Just prior to the 1920's the measurement movement with its development of scientific assessment techniques, particularly in the measurement of mental traits, promoted great enthusiasm for measurement and evaluation in the schools. While still continuing to justify the use of a normal curve as a means of assigning marks, the schools were gradually beginning to give some recognition to the learners' efforts to succeed. One novel feature was introduced about this time and that was reporting marks by percentile rank in the students' class. It soon became apparent in the research studies of this time that if a student was going to be marked on both effort and achievement that a single symbol would be incapable of providing both kinds of information. Using the same symbol for achievement and effort led to much confusion.

With the 1920 development of advanced research techniques and more precise measuring instruments many of the defects of marks begun to appear. As a result the 1930's was a time of re-examination and also a recognition that the current practices generally overlooked the importance of personal and social development. Although the profession generally agreed that these other types of student growth should be reported they felt they should not be confused with the marks of academic achievement. As a result, cards were produced which had separate sections for subject matter marks and the other areas of development. It was during the 30's that research in human development was producing findings of great importance to the education of children. Knowledge about human perception, new understandings in human growth and development and the discovery of the profound uniqueness and great differences among humans all forced the profession to re-examine the use of marks. The obvious inadequacies of the symbolic type of reporting began to show with the increasing complexity of understanding behavior. Reliability studies were showing the marked inconsistency of marking from one teacher to another and a teacher with herself at different times. Studies were also showing the effect of teacher attitude and other characteristics of pupils apparently unrelated to achievement which were affecting the marks teachers were giving.

The following points characterize the emphasis of marking during the past 20 years:

1. Marking systems that are immediately meaningful to both the learner and the parents. This has often resulted in a written explanation and interpretation in an attempt to assure some degree of uniformity in the meanings of the mark.
2. Marking systems that are standardized for all teachers to assist them in attaining some uniformity. Standards would be clearly stated on the cards which were sent home.

3. Marking systems that are subjected to periodic review, preferably in cooperation with parents. During this time there has been more concern with purposes of marking and their relation to learning. Greater interest has been shown in making marking practices consistent with the educational objectives of the school.

In 1956 Ristow (90) reported the following trends shown in the literature of school reporting practices.

1. Away from a single report card. Toward several types of reports each designed for a specific purpose, i.e., reports to parents, to pupils, to other school personnel, to employers, and to public agencies.
2. Away from a single report form or technique. Toward the use of several channels of communication for reporting, i.e., report cards, group parent conferences, individual parent conferences, news bulletins, home visits, etc.
3. Toward reports based upon the cooperative thinking of parents, pupils, and school personnel.
4. Toward more self-evaluation by pupils.
5. Toward informal, narrative reports and parent conferences. Toward providing space on written reports for parental comments.
6. Away from mere judgment passing and toward analysis of difficulties and suggestions for improvement.
7. Toward more descriptive, anecdotal, and interpretative material to supplement quantitative marks.
8. Toward less frequent but more meaningful reports. Infrequent reports which are detailed descriptions of specific behaviors and achievements.
9. Toward more emphasis on the development of the whole child. Personality and character as well as academic achievement. Reports on physical, social, and emotional growth as well as academic growth.
10. Away from fixed reporting periods such as quarterly, monthly, or semester reports. Toward the policy of reporting when

reports are requested or needed.

11. Away from the concept of marks indicating relationship to externally imposed standards, such as grade-level standards or nationwide norms. Toward the concept of marks indicating relationship to individual capacity.
12. Away from marks in large subject areas such as arithmetic, reading, and history. Toward marks in specific skills and learnings such as word-recognition, word-meanings, understanding numbers, use of fundamental arithmetic skills, addition of fractions, etc.
13. Away from status marks such as "Excellent," "Good," "Poor," etc. Toward detailed check-lists of specific behavior related to the aims of the grade or school. The trend is to check and describe rather than to mark.
14. Toward fewer points in the marking system. Away from numerous discrete points such as A, B, C, D, F, or A, A-, B+, B, B-, C+, C, C-, etc., or percentage grades. Toward fewer and more inclusive grades such as E, S, U (Excellent, Satisfactory, Unsatisfactory) or O, S, N (Outstanding, Satisfactory, Needs Improvement).
15. Among colleges and universities to accept changes in reporting practices and to accept students upon the recommendation of high school principals rather than to base college entrance upon report card marks.

SECTION IV

Present Practices

By and large the trends outlined by Ristow in the previous section continue to reflect the practices districts are following at this date. However, there was a rather sharp change at the elementary level just following the so-called "Sputnik" crisis. At that time many of the elementary districts which had developed a more simplified system of symbols, with little of a comparative basis used, were forced by public pressure to adopt a more traditional "A-F" marking designation with consequent emphasis on comparisons rather than student progress. Once again though, there seems to be a swing in the direction of the individualized report and a reduction on the comparison as a basis.

The most notable of Ristow's trends affecting all levels, whether or not traditional symbols are used, is to supplement the card and the marks with other reporting devices: formal and informal letters, check lists, formal and informal conferences--both individualized and group. This has been most marked at the secondary level where "grade mania" has its fullest impact and ability grouping for instruction has complicated the whole marking problem.

An increasing number of junior high schools are scheduling at least two conferences per year for each parent, supplementing conferences by other means of reporting. McEachen (71) studied 155 junior high schools and found half of them made regular use of parent-teacher conferences and nearly half of the schools also used letters to parents. Attesting to the potential of parent conferences at the high school level, Trytten (107) reports the following advantages of the parent-teacher conference used at University High School, Ann Arbor, Michigan:

1. "Communication was established with more parents than by any other plan. Of the six grades, 94% of all parents attended.
2. The parents expressed almost unanimous approval of the procedure with about 85% of the parents returning for the second series of conferences.
3. The home room teachers without exception said that the conferences had been valuable though strenuous.

4. The teachers made every effort to define their objectives and to observe behavior in order that their comments might be valid and specific enough to be helpful."

Michael reports trends in *Reporting Growth to Parents at the High School Level* (78:147). He found that the majority of high schools still use the "A-E" traditional card. Some issue three marks for each course: (1) Academic Achievement, (2) Social Habits, (3) Work Habits. He says the schools are discovering that the letter system alone does not suffice. "Parents expect and deserve more than the customary four or six indications of progress during the year." He found a widely-used supplementary report was "Report of Unsatisfactory Progress." He found a practice that the elementary school teachers have been following for many years and now gaining greater use at the high school level is the personal written comment. Although it is virtually out of the question for teachers to do this for as many as 150 children each reporting period they rotate it for each of their classes which makes it 30 for each reporting period. A possible solution to the thorny problem of grading when students are grouped according to ability is suggested. Under this plan each grade, A through E, is equal to a certain number of points, i.e., A = 5, B = 4, etc. The particular section the student is in would have a multiplier, for example the top ability section would have 6; middle, 5; and low, 4. In other words a top section A would get 30 points; a low section A would get 20 points. This, he feels, is one way of assuring parents that those in the top sections would not suffer in terms of college acceptance.

A somewhat similar plan reported by Caudle (26) is used at Clear Creek High School, League City, Texas. It also follows a three-track system with assigned grade points. On the report card and in the permanent card superior courses or premium courses are marked "P" and terminal courses "T". "A" through "F" symbols are used on the report cards except for semester grades, in which case grade points are given for each unit according to the following table:

	Grade points for semesters		
	Premium	Regular	Terminal
A--90-100 = Superior	10	9	8
B--80-89 = Good	9	8	7
C--70-79 = Fair	8	7	6
D--60-69 = Low	7	6	5
F--below 60	0	0	0

By having grade points range from ten through five rather than having a top value of four or three as colleges do, the total grade points earned can easily be converted to a percentage, similar to those to which the students are accustomed. Example:

> A student who makes an "A" each semester on three regular courses and a "B" on the other two and one-half courses permitted would receive grade points as follows:
>
> 6 A's -- 54 points
> 5 B's -- 40 points
> Total -- 90 points
>
> The maximum which can be earned by the student is 105, since only three premium courses are permitted. If all "A's" are made, the student earns 60 points for premium courses and 45 points for the remaining two and one-half regular courses. The total for any year can be divided by 105, getting a percentage approximately the same as if traditional percentages were assigned. Thus, in the example given, 94 grade points divided by 105 would be an 89.5 average.

It is suggested that this method of computing marks can challenge superior students without penalizing the slow ones. The Clear Creek High School offers "premium" courses for the upper 20% of its students and those others who may elect them. The "regular" course is the same quality of work traditionally offered for the great majority of the students in high school, and the "terminal" course is for the lower 20% of the students. Some of the advantages suggested by this plan are:

1. Academic honors can be determined by the total grade points earned.
2. A student who aspires to academic honors must select premium courses in order to enter academic competition.
3. Teachers who work with terminal groups can conscientiously give good grades for good work on this level, since the students received only eight points for a terminal "A" as compared with a premium "C".
4. Ranking of students becomes a simple matter of addition to determine the total number of grade points earned.

Elementary schools frequently employ a single card with marks affixed for all or a majority of the subjects. Junior high schools and senior high schools who do use a single report card system rely upon a central clerk, counselor, or home room teacher to copy upon each student's master card the marks submitted by each of his teachers. The elementary school report card with its marks tends to be more diagnostic than the junior high school and the senior high school, where separate marks frequently are given for such things as grammar, reading, and spelling which are all divisions of English. In the lower grades many of the specific skills which contribute toward the general skill of reading are also marked separately. Occasionally, however, in some junior high schools and high schools where a separate card is issued for each subject the teachers have an opportunity to record evaluations that are somewhat diagnostic in terms of students' strengths and weaknesses. Partly because of the demand for grades for occupational placement and higher education, the high school has not had the flexibility of experimenting with a variety of reporting methods, forms, and marks as the elementary school has had. However, part of this may have been due to the close contact elementary teachers have maintained with the classroom unit itself, having just one group of youngsters and also greater contact with the parents and children. Some of the methods with which the elementary school has occasionally experimented are designations such as "Satisfactory" or "Unsatisfactory" and occasionally "Outstanding." Some narrative reports in the form of personal letters to parents have been used and more recently attention has been given to developing oral, or the conference type of reporting where less emphasis is placed on symbols related to progress and more on reporting the specific characteristics of the youngsters' academic growth.

Some schools have modified their traditional marking systems to the extent of substituting check lists or descriptive accounts for marks. Each item on the check list is checked in the appropriate column: "Very High," "Above Average," "Average," "Below Average," "Very Low," or: "Satisfactory Progress," "Is Improving," or "Needs Much Improvement."

The practice which probably has gained most widespread application is that of a type of dual marking system. Regardless of what symbols the school has been using generally, they have almost all (including many high schools) moved to a kind of dual system which provides one mark for a youngster's standing in his class and another mark to evaluate his achievement in relation to his capacity. However, some schools use a card which has one designation, "Effort," with which the teacher may use the same letter symbols "A" through "E" or may use just the two letters "S" or "U". Frequently this is very confusing in that one is not clear as to the meaning of the word 'effort'--whether it means how hard the child is working compared to how hard he is capable of working or whether it might be how hard he has been working in relation to his former position, or other meanings.

The National Education Association (82) did a nation-wide survey of school districts in December, 1960 to determine their practices in reporting pupil progress. Among other things it found that parent-conferences are an important method of reporting how pupils progress. For elementary schools, more than three-fourths of the districts utilize conferences together with report cards for informing parents of pupil progress. Only slightly more than three-fourths of the districts utilize conferences together with report cards for informing parents of pupil progress. Only slightly more than one-fifth rely solely on the report card. In half the districts, the combination method of reporting was used in junior high schools and in two-fifths of the senior high schools. In analyzing the trends in reporting methods they found a relative trend toward change at all grade levels. However, where any trend toward change was reported it was almost always toward the combination of report cards and parent conferences. As an indication of the interest the high school is showing in using the combination method of conferences with report cards, 63% of one group of school districts reported using the dual system. At the same time, taking all sizes of high school districts into consideration, only two groups of districts reported a change to a report card only and in each case this was less than one per cent. It is quite clear then that the high school is beginning to see the tremendous value of face-to-face meetings between the school and the home in discussing the progress of their students.

An unpublished doctoral study done by Kingsley (63), found in a survey of parents and teachers concerning reporting procedures that 75% of both groups were interested in having the following items in their reporting program: statements explaining the meaning of the symbols used in marking, absent and tardy records, personality trait ratings, "S" and "U" showing progress in Music and Physical Education, space for teacher comments, warning slips, parent-teacher conferences, a back-to-school night PTA meeting, and one afternoon a month for parents and teachers to hold brief conferences. On the other hand both groups also agreed that the following items had little value or were perhaps harmful: personal letters from teachers replacing report cards, "S" and "U" showing progress in academic subjects, and raising or lowering an academic mark because of poor conduct. In addition the parents favored an effort mark in each subject and work habits but the teachers did not.

Brooks (19), principal of a junior high school, reports on the initial attempt at scheduling formal parent-teacher conferences in their school and of the resounding success they experienced with this plan. They used 15-minute conferences all day long with coffee breaks mid-morning and afternoon. The subject area teachers of each of the students reported to the advisers who held the conferences with the parents. A check sheet analysis of the pupil's work for the prior nine weeks and suggestions for improvement were prepared. The parent received these with a report card during the conference. The conferences apparently were extremely well received. They had an immediate 98% turn-out with better than half the remaining two per cent coming within one week after.

DeVita (33) tells of a plan in the junior high school called the "Opportunity to Learn Program." This program, along with no home work and no grade level designations, did not use report cards. However, this dealt exclusively with the non-academic parts of the school program, such as orchestra, glee club, various electives, dramatics, reading improvement, arithmetic improvement, etc. The teachers, students, and also the parents almost unanimously supported the program, "which is an effort to formalize the nonacademic part of the regular school program without using grades and giving more opportunities for individual selection and choice."

Although some schools, particularly at the elementary level, have for many years attempted to involve the student in a degree of self-evaluation there have not been many districts as a matter of policy pursuing the true practice of systematic self-evaluation on the part of students. Most often, in practice this kind of a plan has resulted in the teacher and the student together discussing his progress prior to the teacher's meeting with the parent and the pupils. Hoffman and Engbretson (52) tell about the experimental parent-teacher-pupil conferences they held at the Campus Elementary School, Western Michigan University. It was their primary interest in getting the student to be more intimately involved with his own self-evaluation that led them to conduct such a study. Generally they felt the results indicated the conferences to be quite successful. The major caution they suggested in attempting such conferences, is that the purpose and intent of the conference should be clear and understood by all concerned; otherwise it can become a kind of punitive situation rather than a positive, supportive experience.

Cuony (30) reports a similar study involving students in a parent-teacher conference at the junior high school level. His results indicated overwhelming support for this particular method. On almost all responses to evaluate the plan the parents were 100% in agreement that the three-way conference was of great value.

A practice which has not had widespread favor but which is gaining in popularity and has a direct relevance to the type of report cards and marks used by a school is that of the ungraded or non-graded school and in some quarters called the "Continuous Progress Plan of School Organization." Goodlad and Anderson (43:Chapter 6) discuss at some length the relation of the problem of reporting pupil progress to a non-graded school. In this plan, of course, the program is highly individualized. The experiences pretty much involve the unique abilities, characteristics, and experiences of each of the students so that some may complete the twelve years of schooling very rapidly while others may take a longer period of time, depending upon their progress. As a result since there is no given grade-level designation for each classroom there will be in some cases a much wider spread or disparity in the various pupil characteristics from top to bottom in a classroom. With this kind of a curriculum organization, marks that have a comparative basis have been of little utility since the progress reported is directly related to one's own individual pattern of growth. This plan has been pioneered at the Brigham Young University High School. Williams (112) reports on the introduction of this plan into a California high school.

A plan for the elementary school identical to this continuous progress plan is reported by Estep (36), the principal of the Laboratory School at Chippensburg State College, Pennsylvania. In this plan there are no marks used at all. The progress of a child is evaluated or assessed in relation to the many varied specific curriculum objectives established for and with him. For example under "Oral Reading Skills" the teacher would indicate where the child is in need of special help, with such specific skills as "Reading so Others Enjoy," "Meaning of the Story," "Natural Expression," and "Recognizes Words Independently and Makes Use of Punctuation Marks." The reporting conferences involves the student, parent, and the teacher and instead of a report card uses a check sheet listing the specific curriculum objectives. This "Profile Reporting Conference" then, is a specific analysis of the child's various strengths and weaknesses in relation to the objectives of the school experience and what is expected of him. No symbols are used. The author states that after the third year of using this particular plan parents and teachers alike refused to go back to the report card. At last writing the program had been in operation six years and apparently was enthisiastically received by teachers and parents.

SECTION V

Assumptions Commonly Held About School Marks

A speaker recently remarked that "science is inherently subversive." By that he meant that if a given field of study or discipline is to retain the identity of a science and not merely be an ideology it must constantly question its assumptions. In other words if education is a science and not merely an ideology, it must continuously submit its fundamental suppositions or assumptions to analysis.

School marks and school marking systems like a number of educational practices carry with them many assumptions which have seldom been questioned. One writer suggested that they need not be exposed to such inquiry since they "have stood the test of time." These assumptions have thus gained a kind of veneer of validity, not because they have been exposed to rigorous scientific inquiry but merely because we continue to use marks. It has been said that such practices gained their original right to truth by being "christened" and continued to confirm that right by being practiced.

In this section a number of these "commonly held assumptions" will be outlined and in the next section we will undertake an analysis of them. The writer has taken the liberty of moving beyond the obvious assumptions to also include some which are not quite so obvious but in his opinion still have an operational impact on school marking practices. These might appropriately be called "hidden assumptions."

It might be helpful first to look at the rather typical functions marks serve in the schools which are, by and large, the practical results of the assumptions held. Wrinkle (113:31) has prepared a commonly accepted framework of functions that marks serve as follows: (1) Administrative functions. Marks indicate whether a student has passed or failed, whether he should be promoted or required to repeat the grade or course, and whether he should be graduated. They are used in transferring a student from one school to another and in judging candidates for admission to college. They may be used by employers in evaluating prospective employees. (2) Guidance functions. Marks are used in guidance and counseling in identifying areas of special ability and inability, in deciding on the advisability of enrolling the student in certain courses and keeping him out of others, and in determining the number of courses in which he may be enrolled. (Some identify this as a 'diagnostic function' being concerned with analysis and prescription in that it goes beyond identifying strong and weak aspects of a pupil's performance and reveals appropriate corrective measures that might be taken.) (3) The information functions. Marks are the chief means employed by the school for giving information to the students and their parents regarding the student's achievement, progress, and success or failure in his school work. (4) Motivation and discipline function. Marks are used to stimulate students to make greater effort in their learning activities. They are used for the same purpose in determing eligibility to honors of many different kinds such as participation in school activities, eligibility to play on the team, membership in selected groups, the winning of scholarships, etc. Wrinkle adds that there are other unstated functions or results of marks, in terms of what they do to students, which could be classified under a special heading "mental hygiene," but things that would go there would be byproducts rather than the intended functions of marks and reports.

Assumption No. 1: School marks generally have commonly-understood meanings.*

The plea from some parents is "I want to know more about my child's school progress so I would rather know if he is getting an A or a B or a C or perhaps 80% or 90% or 70%." This kind of statement of course assumes that an A or a B or 80% or 90% has a commonly understood meaning. It is assumed that the individual teacher or other person who is deriving the mark is basing it on objective information, on standards which he uses in common with other teachers and in common with himself from time-to-time, that he is consistent in the application of these standards and is unaffected by factors outside of the objective standards themselves. It is also assumed that the assessment procedures and instruments he uses to gather information from which he will derive a mark are in common with other teachers and have a consistency from time-to-time in his own experience.

---

*Several of the assumptions listed are adaptations from those reported by Wrinkle (113:chapters 6, 7)

Assumption No. 2: Marks are an effective and necessary means of motivating learning and improving behavior.

This assumption deals with the learning process and its relation to the student's progress toward accomplishing the goals of the school. By implication it suggests that students will not, cannot, or could be little inclined to learn and to grow academically or in other ways without the use of the mark as an incentive to grow. It also assumes that the student will not, cannot, or will be less inclined toward acceptable social behavior, if it were not for the mark to stimulate him and act as an incentive for him to behave in such fashion.

Assumption No. 3: A student can achieve any mark he wishes if he is willing to make the effort.

This is essentially an assumption of equality among students in their potential for success toward learning. The only obstacle to any student getting an A is his willingness to try hard.

Assumption No. 4: A student's success in his after-school life compares favorably with his success in school.

This assumption suggests that the kinds of comparisons a student is faced with amongst his classmates are essentially the same he will face in after-school life as an adult. The abilities will be similar, the talents will be the same, in fact the differences on any characteristic will be essentially the same in after-school life as those he faces in school as he attempts to achieve success.

Assumption No. 5: Marks are justifiably and accurately used in classifying students for placement, promotion, college admissions, etc.

Assumption No. 1 concerning the commonly understood meanings of marks is directly related to this assumption. Obviously if one is going to use marks for some form of classification or placement it must be accepted that they do have essentially common meanings from student to student. The assumption then is that they are an effective and accurate means of placing youngsters in certain classes or promoting them from one class to another or in predicting the probabilities of success in such placements. Also it is assumed that marks are an effective means of predicting college success; thus they must be used as a major college admission criterion. This assumption of course is used as a primary justification for retaining marks in high school.

Assumption No. 6: The competitive marking system provides a worthwhile and justifiable introduction to competitive adult life.

This assumption has some common elements with Assumption No. 4 concerning the equivalence of life in school and life after school and also Assumption No. 2 concerning marks as an effective means of motivating learning. In addition, what this assumption really means is that since competition is our way of life in our dominant adult culture, then it makes sense that children experience similar competition to prepare them for this adult competition. It also assumes that this competition in the meantime is a healthy process to instill a respect for success in the classroom in that the assumption states that it is worthwhile; it also follows then that one assume few or no negative byproducts to this competitive pursuit.

Assumption No. 7: Marks are a useful guidance tool.

The assumption here is that marks or grades have utility in enabling the teacher and the student to arrive at a more complete picture of his relative strengths and weaknesses in order to plan a program which will enable the student to gain a better understanding of himself but also to pursue those tasks that enable him to accomplish the educational goals of the school in his own unique pattern.

Assumption No. 8: The student's mark is comparable to a worker's paycheck.

This assumption is again related to an earlier assumption concerning the similarity of classroom experiences to adult society. It implies that because people work for pay, students then should get the added realism to feel that their marks are comparable to a worker's paycheck from business and industry. The implication is also present of the teacher as an employer and the student as an employee.

Assumption No. 9: School marks can be used as a means to an end without their becoming thought of as an end in themselves.

The implication here is that the mark will not distract a student from the broad goals of his educational experience. The assumption is that the immediate goal of the mark once accomplished will transfer itself to the major outcomes of the experience beyond the school. In other words, students will tend to work toward the full measure of learning and knowledge and not be primarily impressed with the acquisition of the grade.

Assumption No. 10: Marks have little relation to a student's personal-social development.

The assumption here is that if marks are a justifiable means of enhancing and reporting a pupil's academic role in school, any other behavioral characteristics shown by him operate outside of the direct impact marks may have on him. One illustration of this which is rather commonly accpeted is that a student who misbehaves and consequently is performing poorly does so not because of the effect of the low marks he is receiving but because of his refusal or laziness to do the assigned work. It is assumed that, by and large, his reaction to himself as a failure, evidenced by low marks, has little to do with his becoming a success. In other words if he would just "settle down" and get busy he could be successful. In fact the low marks should be an incentive for him to do this.

SECTION VI

Analysis of Assumptions

Assumption No. 1: Marks in general have commonly understood meanings.

The earlier newspaper quotation[1] by an educational leader to the effect that report cards without marks are what he calls "non-report cards" and that cards should have letters or numbers because these convey something of meaning to the parents, would suggest that there is an audience that will accept this assumption.

When the writer has been shown the letter marks on the report card of his own child at a parent-teacher conference he is strongly inclined to say, "Yes, but now may I see what he is doing in his school work?" When Robert Browning, the poet, was once asked to interpret one of his more difficult lines in a poem he said, "When I first wrote that, only God and Robert Browning knew what it meant. Now only God knows." It seems certain that if a given teacher were honest about her marking practices and aware of the tremendous number of factors and forces that influence the determination of a given grade she too would probably give a similar answer when asked to interpret a grade.

Wrinkle (113:36) gives the following comment when discussing the fallacy concerning the universal meaning that marks frequently have attributed to them: "An exact appraisal usually demands a discreet, observable performance that satisfies clearly stated conditions and is judged simply in a dichotomous 'go' or 'no go,' 'acceptable' or 'not acceptable.' As types of performance, stated conditions, and the number of alternative judgments increase, any attempt to express all the judgments by a single symbol causes the meaning of the judgment to be blurred. For example, a teacher gives John a mark of "B" in arithmetic in an effort to say, 'John understands arithmetic very well but he doesn't hand in all the assignments. Some of those he does hand in are very untidy and difficult to read. He doesn't pay attention in class, frequently talks out of turn, and seems indifferent to what I'm trying to do. Obviously I cannot give him an A even though he knows arithmetic very well. There are so many things he could do to improve.'"

---

[1] op.cit., p. 11

In addition to the problem of combining varieties of information into a single grade, teachers must also have a standard of performance clearly in mind. Is the progress observed or measured to be judged in terms of the pupil's status at the beginning of instruction? Is it to be in terms of his ability? Is it to be related to the progress of other members of the class or to the progress of similar classes at other times and in other schools?

Teachers may also consciously or unconsciously use a grading symbol to do things other than convey information. They are all concerned with motivation, and some may feel that a lower grade can serve as a whiplash for a particular pupil whereas a higher grade can make another child rise to the occasion and strive to maintain it. Teachers who know their pupils as individuals are more prone to modify grades in this manner. Occasionally (perhaps more than we are willing to acknowledge) teachers use grades to threaten or discipline. This usage may represent a compound penalty if one assumes that initial learnings were impeded by the breach of discipline and the resultant grade is lowered again as a disciplinary measure.

In addition to these factors which influence the determination of a mark studies have shown that women teachers tend to give higher marks than men teachers. They also show that girls tend to get higher marks than boys for comparable levels of accomplishment. Studies also tend to show that most-liked students are marked higher than their achievement warrants and least-liked students are marked lower than their achievement warrants (Encyclopedia of Educational Research, 1960 edition, pp. 783-789).

Battle (11) compared the congruence in values between teacher and pupil and its effect on the marks given by the teacher. He found that when aptitude, age, sex, and other related student characteristics were closer to similar characteristics in the teacher, the teacher tended to grade the student higher. He says "the value patterns of those who received good marks in a particular subject tended to have a higher correlation with value patterns considered ideal by the teachers who determine the marks than did the patterns of pupils who received low marks in the subject. It seems reasonable to conclude that in determining school marks a teacher expresses bias in favor of the pupil who tends to have a pattern of values close to the teacher's ideal."

Adams (2) suggests that it is ironic that the letter scale was introduced because teachers could not mark as accurately using the percentage scale and now they are being asked to evaluate that which is vastly more difficult and more often than not virtually defies evaluation, such as the many kinds of non-academic behavior characteristics about which the schools have concern today: citizenship, dependability, cooperation, self-reliance, sportsmanship, self-control, and different forms of responsibility.

Hadley (46) attempted to measure the effects of student characteristics on their grades other than actual academic accomplishment. He found the following: most-liked pupils tended to be marked higher than their accomplishment would justify. Also there was a strong tendency for teachers to mark least-liked students lower than their actual attainment. For the large number of pupils whose acceptance and attainment are intermediate in degree, the marks below, above, or at attainment were the result of chance or accidental factors. Girls were given higher rankings in both acceptance and marks in spite of their relative equivalence in actual attainment as measured by standard tests.

A classic study which showed the great unreliability in marking was that done by Starch and Elliott (102). They distributed geometry papers to 161 math teachers to be marked. The teachers' ratings on the papers ranged from 28% to 92%. If this range were converted to a five-letter equivalent scale, chances are it would run from F to B and possibly some A's. There have been many other reliability studies which have found similar results.

Wrinkle (113:36) concludes "each teacher, then, makes these determinations, modifications, or distortions in assigning grades according to his referents and his purpose. Each recorded grade has lost the antecedents by the particular teacher of the particular class in a particular school. It seems doubtful that a single grading symbol has the universal meaning often attributed to it."

Obviously, lack of control over these many variables which influence the teacher's determination of a mark makes it impossible at present to know what a given mark completely means. Whatever a mark means only the person who gives it can tell.

Assumption No. 2: Marks are an effective and necessary means of motivating learning and improving behavior.

This assumption can be analyzed from two points. First, when one assumes that they are an effective means of motivating learning and behavior it is implied that they are useful tools or devices to be used in the classroom to assist students in moving toward the academic and behavioral goals of the school. Second, the assumption that they are a "necessary means" implies specifically that students would not work toward the goals of school--in fact would not work, period. Or perhaps more generally, it implies a particular concept of the nature of man as it relates to his willingness or unwillingness to produce. Are marks a necessary means of motivation? This assumes a nature of man as a quiet, docile, apathetic, inert, or quiescent being who is incapable or unable to move toward the accomplishment of goals specifically involving some means of production without some external stimulus to prod him into action. In other words, according to this assumption man is seen as fundamentally indolent. In economic theory this concept is called "quietism." Girvetz (42:36) explains the roots of this concept in the early development of the economic system in this country. Jeremy Bentham and Adam Smith, two of the early economic theorists in the capitalistic system developed this concept. To them the use of effort was seen as singularly necessary to produce activity and effort will not be made without promise of reward. Since they saw effort as painful and man as having an aversion to pain and seeking pleasure, man will not produce--will not put forth effort or work unless there is a correspondingly greater amount of pleasure than pain attached to it. Under this theory the motives that are involved in man's seeking activity are viewed as causes of the activity rather than as factors in the activity. In other words, motives are seen as arising from outside of the person rather than being related to a natural inner drive toward growth in man which enables him to redirect his behavior. The associational psychology of Thomas Hobbes then related the satisfaction of a desire to the pleasure derived such that the satisfied desire was seen as associated with or accompanied by the pleasure and it was assumed that pleasure was the object or motive of all desire. John Locke's concept of the tabula rasa is also a part of this theory. That is that mind is like wax which accepts the seal of sensations without imparting any character of its own and makes man really an absorbent rather than an agent.

In other words, according to this concept of the nature of man the implication for a classroom experience is that students are basically quiescent or indolent by nature and incapable of movement or activity until the teacher can explicitly or implicitly promise a sufficiently pleasurable reward to be attached to the explicit or implicit painful nature of the activity. Since students would not "produce" or do their classroom work without a sufficiently strong external incentive to overcome this inertia then marks must be endowed with great "pleasure value," or reward. Generally this would mean if one achieves the high marks one achieves the rewards which are attained by acceptance of others. If one does not achieve the high marks then one must live with pain of failure and non-acceptance of others.

Except for the fact that this theory of the nature of man is so widespread in its application to our economic system and general cultural millieu the tendency would be to dismiss it altogether. One need only observe the enormous degree that young children are driven toward activity, toward creativity, toward exploration, toward experimentation--in fact, toward knowledge and learning without any reference to an external motivating force. This concept of human growth completely denies the self-realizing, self-fulfilling potential in human experience.

The authorities supporting this position concerning the nature of man would suggest then that man is incapable of production or work unless continually prodded by external means. Anthropologist Melville J. Herskovits in his book, The Economic Life of Primitive People, (51:69-70) found that the primitive inhabitants of the South Sea Islands he had studied "worked hard despite the fact that here, almost uniquely in the world, man is furnished by nature with practically all he needs."

In spite of the logic of the argument against this conception of man there are some who say the reality of our culture is that by the time young people reach school age or at least by the time they have reached middle childhood during school, they have been largely induced into an "outer orientation" rather than what had been earlier in their lives an "inner orientation." To be sure, in many instances motivation seems to require such things as marks which involves either the direct reward of pleasure or the avoidance of pain. However, even accepting this as reality in the life of a student there are several reasons why the use of marks in this fashion do not attain their assumed effectiveness and indeed may have an opposite effect and as shown by some studies are not even necessary to motivate learning.

In another section the relationship between marks and personal-social development will be dealt with. At this point however it is well to recognize that many authorities feel that the continuing emphasis on the externals, the things, the outer orientation can have a devasting effect on man's personal identity. Fromm in his Art of Loving (41:86), makes a dramatic point of what he refers to as the alienation of man in mass culture due to the consequences of man's seeing himself merely as an object among other nonhuman things in the culture. Snygg and Combs (101:225) make the point that if the child were freed from the fear of low marks or from the constant pressure for high marks he would be much more able to recognize the defects in his own work and accept responsibility for them. It is a fact that many teachers find the most effective type of evaluation is that which is made by the student himself in such a situation where he is free from threat and can deal with an understanding adult. In response to the question, "How would you get children to work?" Snygg and Combs add that once the major purpose of education is shifted from the acquisition of pure subject matter into the development of an adequate phenomenal self then we have shifted to an activity for which the child does not need to be motivated. In this activity they feel that there is a constant drive toward enhancement of self and if one is not directed toward other kinds of goals driven by fears of punishment for failure that he will continue to move toward self-improvement.

Dreikurs (35:118) relates this concept of motivating youngsters' learning through external rewards or punishments to what he refers to as "our autocratic tradition" which has supported the idea that force or reward must be used to motivate behavior rather than a natural urge to grow and a desire to participate in a meaningful way in a social group. He refers to this as a slave mentality and feels that children must be kept in line or intimidated to produce through fear of punishment. "A child is never sure that he is good enough--getting top grades is sometimes not enough."

Manoil (74) in discussing appraisal in education suggests that if students are not committed to the grade as the goal of the learning task then the knowledge of the results of the task could take the form of intrinsic satisfaction in which case the predominating feedback would come from self-appraisal or feeling of accomplishment. He indicates that this involves a higher degree of involvement in the learning process, and the resulting transformation of the school situation into a personal matter with understanding and meaningfulness prevailing.

Bruner[1] when discussing the problem of intrinsic versus extrinsic rewards, indicates that students should have the experience of becoming completely absorbed in problems, a situation he felt they seldom experience in school. With enough absorption in class, he thought some students might be able to transfer such feelings to their own work and "...discover the pleasure of full and effective functioning." Manoil (74) continues,"...from the point of view of appraisal of the effectiveness of teaching, the grades acquire uppermost importance. The student has to be able to reproduce, recall, and know what the teacher had offered him, without too much room for individual involvement, creativity, or a sense of personal appreciation. In fact, the evaluation made by the teacher becomes the paramount motivational factor. This restricts both learning and understanding, besides resulting in deformed and dependent behavioral patterns."

To show that there are many other forces operating in a learning situation, Josephson[2] in a very interesting study concluded that under some circumstances grades or marks actually stimulate students to fail. Taking off from Allison Davis' hypothesis that a desire for high grades is not related to ability and that students in some schools may find it more rewarding to be considered academic failures than to be successes, he did a study in an attempt to test this out. Accepting an assumption Davis presents that adolescent groups from lower classes tend to value low grades in school, Josephson found that the mark aspiration level of high ability students was low and the mark aspiration level of ability students was high, both leading to the peer-accepted code of failure. Thus, the author concludes in this situation grading as an evaluative process may actually serve as a deterrent to learning.

---

[1] Jerome S. Bruner, The Process of Education. New York: Vintage Books, 1963,p.50.

[2] Charles H. Josephson, "Do Grades Stimulate Students to Failure?" Chicago School Journal, 43:122-127, December 1961.

Baker and Doyle (8) studied two eighth-grade student populations, one marked on a comparative symbol marking basis, the other marked on an individualized marking basis. The comparative marking was assumed to involve the mark as a motivating device to a much greater degree. This involved two separate studies at two periods of time, both involving the same pupulation. In the first, after having an individualized plan of assessing growth according to ability and then changing over to a competitive marking plan they found that the change to the more competitive system made little or no difference in the academic accomplishment as measured by results of achievement tests. Following the same population of eighth-graders into the ninth grade of high school (9) they tested the hypothesis that a comparative marking system in the eighth grade would prepare those graduates to compete more effectively for their initial marks in high school. Using the grades given in the ninth grade in English and algebra as a criterion they found no significant differences between youngsters who had been in the two groups in the eighth grade. One group was marked in the eighth grade on an individualized basis according to their ability the other group marked in the eighth grade on a comparative basis according to their rank in class.

Whether a mark can be effective in stimulating a youngster to improve his comparative standing among his classmates is open to serious question from several points of view. In the first place, the fact of differences in intellectual talent place a very severe limitation on the movement of a youngster within his group. The other is the relative effect of the different backgrounds of experiences students bring into the classroom setting. Some are much better prepared to succeed at the tasks--others much less. Then there is also the relative effect of success and failure on one's aspiration to change. Research has many times confirmed the proposition that failure tends to restrict and inhibit one's aspirations and success tends to have a facilitating effect on one's growth and aspiration. Reed (89:4) puts it this way: "One who has always been hungry will have a greater tolerance for hunger or a higher threshold than one who has usually had this need easily satisfied. One who has always received D grades learns to accept that fact. To a straight 'A' student, a 'B' may be more traumatic than an 'F' to a 'D' student.

Bostram, et al, (17) did a fascinating study in which they analyzed the relative effect of success or failure on students' effort to achieve. They hypothesized that a high grade would serve to effect repetition of the responses which it followed and a low or poor grade would produce a reduction in the potentiality of appearance of the preceding responses which it followed. High grades were A's and low grades were D's. Initially the subjects were administered an attitude scale and then asked to write essays defending a position opposite that shown by them on the attitude scale. For example if a subject showed by attitude on the scale that he opposed socialized medicine then he was asked to write an essay defending it. All of the essay papers were then randomly assigned one-third A's, one-third D's, or no grade. The attitude scale was then readministered following the administration of the grades. They found that the "A" group moved in the direction of their essays to significantly greater degree statistically than the "D's" or the non-grades. This seems to rather effectively show that success in this case as measured by a high grade has a facilitating effect on one's movement and failure as measured by a low grade has a debilitating effect on one's movement.

Wrinkle (113:34) in discussing the relative effects of marks on motivation and behavior, makes a distinction between the serving of a function and the _defensible_ serving of a function. He agrees that the use of marks can actually be productive of increased learning activity on the part of many students, and they might reduce certain types of undesirable behavior. However, he makes a plea to consider long-term values in that the use of marks and devices for the stimulation or the deterring of certain types of student activity are not only indefensible but may for the most part be detrimental. He says, "The need for marks as persuasive devices, as pressure instruments, to induce and increase application of student effort is based on an assumption that students do not want to do what the school wants them to do." And he says that in large measure this is not merely an assumption--it is a fact. It is a fact because in some situations the objectives of the school are very unrelated to the needs, interests and purposes of the students through learning activities which are predetermined, materials which are preselected, and legislated or college-dictated courses of study. Thus he would seem to agree with another authority who said that marks were invented as an attempt to interest students in a rather dull and listless curriculum. Teachers find themselves having to threaten students with failure who happen to learn slowly and to encourage students with superior ability to apply themselves by the use of honor rolls and similar devices. "If a student does not recognize the value of what he is doing or is asked to do, the school certainly is not meeting the situation constructively by promoting learning activity through fear of punishment or desire of reward. It would be a far more intelligent plan if teachers were to devote their energies to developing a curriculum which would involve real values--values which in turn would stimulate students to effective activity and to improving instructional procedures which make unnecessary the continued use of pressure devices." (113:34)

Assumption No. 3: A student can achieve any mark he wishes--if he is willing to make the effort.

When one considers the great variety of talents, experiences, and backgrounds in the typical American comprehensive school this assumption seems so patently false that it would not require any analysis. However, only a cursory observation will reveal that many teachers do in fact assume that each student has an equal chance to achieve any mark he wishes if he will only try harder. This is a little like the lifting-one's-self-up-by-one's-bootstraps concept. The most obvious fact which rejects this assumption is the scientifically verified and axiomatic concept of human differences. It is in complete defiance of known facts about differences in students' ability, their rate of learning, their interests, and the background of experiences they bring to the classroom. They all learn different things in different ways and at different rates.

This assumption about marking insists that all types of pupils learn the same things in the same way at the same rate. This assumption might have some validity if progress in learning was graded in terms of the pupil's ability and would involve his own unique standards or if the class or group was completely homogeneous in ability. At higher levels of education such as college or graduate education where the range of talent is much narrower and considerably above average and where the group is highly selective then it is possible that it may have some validity. However, it is an extremely questionable assumption in regard to a group involving students of less than average ability in a heterogeneous classroom.

The application of this assumption to a school in a socially and economically impoverished community has particularly tragic results. Here the deficiencies of a comparative marking system are so obvious as to hardly need mention. In some high schools the policy of grading in which a youngster is put on probation with a certain number of failures and then expelled from school with a second semester repetition of such failures does little to consider the effect the background of these youngsters has upon their failure in school. To assume that these youngsters are not achieving merely because they are not willing to make the effort is a complete denial of the facts that authorities have so pointedly described concerning the inappropriate nature of the school curriculum in poverty areas. The number of disadvantaged children taught by teachers with predominantly middle class values is rapidly increasing. As Reisman points out: "In 1950 approximately one child out of every ten in the fourteen largest cities in the United States was culturally deprived. By 1960 this figure had risen to one in three. By 1970, it is estimated there may be one deprived child for every two enrolled in schools in the large cities."[1] The challenge, then, to the schools in many areas is clear cut. The instructional program must be modified rather than assuming that failing marks are caused by lazy children. Grambs adds: "There is abundant evidence that the procedures and goals of the school are not only incompatible with the child's home experiences, but are incomprehensible to him."[2]

Of course the underlying fallacy of this assumption is its denial of the highly personal and individualized nature of learning. Learning is a result of the learner's own concept of himself and the situation in which he sees himself. If he sees himself as being able to succeed, as competent, then he will be able to make progress in learning. In discussing this requirement for effective learning, Rasey and Menge (88:36-37) coined a word: "canness." They say "it is first essential that an individual see himself as a simple doer, as one who can. So long as he sees himself as one who cannot he is lame and blind to his own enhancement. He cannot try. The literal application of the symbol marking system has done a great deal of damage to "canness," perhaps more than any other single practice. The use of comparative, competitive marking has destroyed the self-concept of many pupils. In order to try, one must believe he can succeed. If most of our efforts have resulted in failure we are progressively less able to try."

---

[1] Frank Reisman, The Culturally Deprived Child. New York: Harper and Row, 1962, p. 1.

[2] Jean D. Grambs, Schools, Scholars, and Society. Englewood Cliffs: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1965, p. 21.

The basic inequality between able and less able students in their opportunity to succeed is pointed out by Snygg and Combs (101:223) when they say, "It is quite apparent that under a competitive marking system only the top students in each class have an opportunity to acquire concepts of success and competency by virtue of their receiving the marks of success. It is essential for all children--not just a few of them--to have opportunities to feel successful and competent."

Assumption No. 4: A student's success in his after-school life compares favorably with his success in school.

To begin with, this assumption is completely false because the group of people with whom a student will be compared in his adult life beyond school is a very different group than that with whom he is compared in the classroom. In adult life his competencies and the evaluation of his abilities to succeed will be compared with the group with which he associates. A teacher will be compared with teachers; a lawyer will be compared with lawyers; a filling station attendant will be compared with filling station attendants. There will be some good lawyers and there will be some poor lawyers. However, in the classroom the determination of one's success by virtue of comparison of the student with other students who may become lawyers or who may become doctors or who may become bankers or who may become filling station attendants is a very inequitable basis for comparison. Even if one took a fairly narrow field of specialization, law, for example, the student who is successful in the classroom will not necessarily be successful even within the legal profession. Grade point averages do not distinguish between successful and unsuccessful attorneys or doctors or teachers or truck drivers. Success in an academic curriculum undoubtedly relates more closely to success in vocational pursuits utilizing the same learning skills but personality factors and circumstance also determine the degree of success one achieves within a chosen field.

Using this inequitable relationship as a competitive basis for a student's success or failure is to Snygg and Combs (101:223) a "great waste of our national resources." They say that this system, this policy, in effect teaches millions of people to think of themselves as mediocre, incompetent, or failures at activities that are socially desirable and even essential. They feel this is exactly what our schools are now doing by requiring all children to compete in a narrow range of verbal activities and giving recognition only to the winners.

Taylor[1] has stressed the lack of relationship between success in school and success in life, particularly for highly creative people. "Grade point averages and the number of years of education are not strongly related to later professional and other high level performances--in fact, unexpectedly low or even zero relationships have often been found between academic and world-of-work performances. Similarly, grades, years of education, and intelligence test scores have not shown very much relationship with creativity."

Assumption No. 5: Marks are justifiably and accurately used for classifying students for placement, promotion, college admissions, etc.

There is no question that marks will continue to receive a great deal of attention in selecting and classifying students, particularly for college admission. Is the accuracy of prediction sufficiently high that they are useful in spite of their obvious limitation and negative byproducts? Is it possible that other criteria might be used which are comparable in accuracy but less potentially damaging to students and school?

The strongest indictment of this assumption of course comes from the lack of universal meaning attributable to marks which was taken up in Assumption No. 1. If one does not know what a teacher has in mind when she is determining marks then any interpretation the college admissions officer will place on them must be made against the referent of the school population, the curriculum of the school, and its marking policies.

---

[1] Calvin W. Taylor, "Challenges for Education from Creativity Findings." Unpublished paper, University of Utah.

Wrinkle (113:41) makes the statement, "It is impossible to tell what an A, B, C, D, E, F, mark means based upon local schools' standards of achievement, unless the achievement or ability level of the school giving the mark is also known." He reports on a summarization of scholastic ability of secondary school pupils done by the American Council on Education which showed a tremendous variation in results even tho the schools were a representative sample of all of the schools involved in the study. "Of these eleven schools, the means ran from a percentile ranking of less than 1 to 93." If one assumes a close relationship between achievement and ability, then the resulting marks assigned are just not comparable from school to school.

Wrinkle[1] adds, "If A, B, C, D, F marks are assigned on the basis of the average achievement of the class, students' marks within a school system can then be correctly interpreted only if the achievement levels of the classes in which they were enrolled are also known."

The California Teachers Association (24) recently completed a study which suggests that in many instances this is not being done by college admission officers. They found that many of the state's colleges and universities were not making any distinction between a grade earned in an honors or high ability class grouping and a grade earned in a regular classroom grouping. This means that a student who attained an A in a regular classroom grouping would be looked upon with greater favor for admission than a student who attained a B in an honors grouping when the A student probably worked at a lower level of accomplishment than did the B student. This, of course, is also due to the grading policy of the high school which frequently applies a normal grading curve to a highly select, accelerated class. It is fairly common knowledge that in such cases bright students will often take regular courses to insure a higher grade and thus guarantee college admission.

In terms of their usefulness as college prediction criteria Ahmann (4:530) says, "Secondary school marks are claimed to be very useful in predicting college marks. A number of studies show relationships represented by correlation co-efficients between .50 and .70. Standardized achievement test scores, however, have been shown to have nearly as high a relationship with college marks as secondary school marks."

---

[1] Op. cit.

Strang (104:48) indicates that colleges will accept school grades of high schools who mark their students on the basis of their ability rather than their comparison. She says that college acceptance of a high school marking system depends a great deal upon the soundness of the school's recommendation in the preceding years. If the high school has recommended students who have succeeded in a particular college then the college will not question the school's marking system. It becomes a problem of guidance.

It is quite apparent, and a cursory observation reveals, that the application of marks as the open seasame to university and college has a rather debilitating effect on the learning experiences of students in high school. It is understandable when students realize that their future educational experience will be determined by the marks and that the marks will assume much greater importance than the learning experiences they are pursuing at the time.

Assumption No. 6: The competitive marking system provides a worthwhile and justifiable introduction to competitive adult life.

Wrinkle (113:48) suggests that since competition is one of the basic forces of adult life, many teachers believe that children should be introduced to competition in school. However, he questions how far the school should go and whether it should stimulate competition to the exclusion of cooperation. Snygg and Combs (101:22) on the contrary feel that the main fallacy in this assumption is that we are introducing children into a life that does not exist. They completely reject the notion that our society is based on competitive forces. They say that no society can afford to countenance indiscriminate competition because the main function of any society is to insure cooperation among its members. They say that people who are frequently chosen for positions of leadership are not those who are ruthless competitors but who by virtue of their cooperation have won the trust and confidence of their people. "The indiscriminately competitive person which the schools seem bound and determined to produce would be distrusted by adults and their children." In addition to systematically preparing youngsters for a life which does not exist they feel at the same time that the process of this competitive marking policy is merely persuading students that they are incompetent to carry on the activities required of them by society. They add that our public schools have maintained the fiction that the students could and should be screened and sifted and the unfit eliminated. In other words, no person can be ignored and pushed out without at the same time endangering the lives and satisfactions of the other members of society. It is not the task of the school by virtue of its process of selection and elimination through marking to convince each student that he is incompetent or less worthy. "On the other hand," Wrinkle continues, "it is the task of the schools to become an asset to society by helping each student to develop his maximum potential as an individual and as a citizen."

Deutsch (32) and Haines (47) as reported in the Handbook of Research in Teaching, studied groups who had been graded cooperatively with groups graded competitively and the relative effects on their learning. They found no significant achievement advantages for one group compared with the other. They did, however, find marked differences in group morale. In both studies the group which had been graded cooperatively worked together in a much smoother fashion and had much higher levels of morale.

In discussing the effects of a competitive classroom structure both the authors of the 1962 ASCD Yearbook, Perceiving, Behaving, and Becoming (1:176) and Dreikurs (35:80-82) refer to the differences shown between a classroom organized on a horizontal basis and one organized on a vertical basis. If a horizontal organization is utilized a person can learn to be useful and acceptable as a unique and different individual and yet relate to human beings in a vertical sense. In the vertical organizational structure people tend to think of progress as being from an inferior to a superior position. The striving to be on top, to be better than others, is frequently achieved by bringing others down to a previously held status. If movement can be made in a horizontal direction by way of expressing social interest and concern for mutual progress in goals and demonstrating unique talents and competencies then there is no need to tear others down. Almost all participants in a vertical organizational structure are subordinates and such an atmosphere actually promotes either passive or irresponsible behavior. As Dreikurs (35:80) puts it, "What one accompoishes is measured from his own point of departure and not his position in the vertical structure of the class. Progress then can be directly related to one's prior position and is not necessarily a function of his position within the group." Dreikurs points out the difficulties in an intensely competitive situation presented to the teacher in her task of helping youngsters to grow and develop. Part of the process of encouraging a child in the classroom is for the teacher to value him as a person regardless of what he is, what he does, or whether he is succeeding or failing. Dreikurs goes on, "Our present system of education does not make it easy for the teacher to encourage her pupils. In an atmosphere of competition no one child can be sure of his place in the group. The necessity to grade, the obligation to "show results" may induce the teacher to meet the situation in a way that is harmful and discouraging to the child involved."

The important point here is not the attempt to remove competition from children's lives because this undoubtedly will be impossible and in fact perhaps not desirable. The important thing is whether one's acceptability as a person in a group in which he is working and living is based upon a symbolic status symbol which is out of the reach of many or whether it is based on his own individual unique talents and willingness to participate cooperatively in group endeavors.

Assumption No. 7: Marks are a useful guidance tool.

This assumption is undoubtedly held more often by non-guidance personnel--teachers and administrators--than by guidance and counseling personnel themselves. Guidance personnel undoubtedly recognize the limited value that a single symbol can convey in terms of assisting to plan for a program of improvement.

All of the prior objections concerning the unreliability and validity and various other factors which tend to affect the meaning and interpretation of a school mark are applicable to the rejection of this particular assumption. The single mark does not indicate to a pupil the points on which he needs to improve. Marks indicate no next steps for him, his parents, or his future teacher. As already shown, they are simply the judgment of a teacher, possibly affected by unrelated matters. As Schwartz and Tiedeman (98:391) put it "they are general statements of achievement whereas specific statements are needed in guidance." The following syllogism applies: "General statements about pupils are of limited value in a guidance program. Marks are very general summary statements of a multitude of unanalyzed variables. Therefore marks have limited guidance value."

The kinds of information which will be most helpful for guidance purposes will have to be sufficiently specific and diagnostic in nature to assist a student to gain a clear understanding of his strengths and weaknesses to enable him to follow a program of improvement. A general mark obviously does not provide this information. Clearly a report to a student and a parent which will specify the information needed will have to be related in specific fashion to the objectives or the goals of the school experience.

The authors of Perceiving, Behaving, and Becoming (1:135) relate the process in marking to the total process of evaluation which is to help each child discover and develop his full potential. It is not a teacher measurement against a predetermined standard for helping each child to extend his own skills. It is, rather, a process of creating opportunities for children to evaluate their current needs, to develop immediate purposes for learning and to set realistic and individual standards. Teachers do this as they help pupils to see themselves accurately and to plan with them the learning tasks suited to the particular needs of the individual. Grades or marks merely rate and do not give sufficient information. They do not specify strengths and weaknesses. They become little more than labels. They define but are not appropriate measures for the child involved in the very personal learning and self-discovery task. Children need evaluation but not labels.

Assumption No. 8: A student's mark is comparable to a worker's pay check.

Wrinkle (113:47) points out because people work for pay, many teachers believe they are adding realism to the student's school experience by considering his mark as comparable to what the worker does in industry. He says of course this is entirely false. The analogy is not accurate because the worker in industry has done something which has been of value to the employer. He has made something or he has provided a service but following the thing he made, the service provided, it was no longer his. It belonged either to the employer or to the person with whom the employer is contracting. Wrinkle asks the obvious question: "When students study and learn does the value resulting from the learning belong to the teacher--or does it belong to the student?" The student can lose sight of the fact that he is the beneficiary of his effort in learning, not the teacher. There are two essential dangers to this "paycheck" idea. One, of course, is that the emphasis will be on piece work or the sheer value of additional work without regard to the quality of that work. These circumstances, where teachers sometime provide bonuses for extra work or time off for work handed in ahead of time, can create a kind of atmosphere where students feel that it is a matter of just getting the work done rather than the work or the assignment that is valuable to them.

The other danger to this concept is that students may develop the value which places a price tag on everything that is done: "What's in it for me?" becomes the guiding force. One of the aims of education is to assist students to increasingly grow in self-insight through developing a closer personal look at themselves and consequently develop personal responsibility. If the student is constantly in a relationship where he feels he is making things or providing services merely for the sake of the teacher then he will not only not develop this degree of personal responsibility but in the case of his own deficiencies he can too readily place the blame for them on the teacher. One can't help but speculate that the long period that some students take--particularly boys--in arriving at that level of self-awareness and personal identity which enables them to make more responsible career choices, might be due in fact to this kind of relationship which teachers encourage by having students, in effect, work for them. A major contribution and value to a student in developing his self-identity would be assisting him to go through the process of self-evaluation at a much younger age in school. This would be done of course not in relation to generalized statements of growth such as are revealed through class marks but through an analysis of one's progress in relation to the specific objectives of his educational experience commensurate with his ability.

Assumption No. 9: School marks can be used as a means to an end without their becoming thought of as ends in themselves.

It should seem perfectly obvious to even the most unseasoned or unsophisticated observer that school marks do, in fact, direct the attention of pupils, parents, and teachers away from the real purposes of education toward symbols that represent success but do not emphasize its elements or meaning. One person called this quite appropriately "grade mania." The recent widespread cheating scandals at one of the Service academies serves to underscore this particular weakness of school marks. Of course cheating in itself isn't necessarily related to marks but because marks are usually based on a competitive standing then it is the mark itself in terms of the standing it represents in the group that will cause students to pursue a number of devisive techniques in order to attain it. As one author puts it, "Because grades are important to them, students will learn whatever is necessary to get the grades they want. If teachers base their grades on memorization of details, students will memorize the text. If students believe grades are based on their ability to integrate and apply principles they will try to acquire such ability." (72:1119) This might suggest that grades can be effective in producing some of the broader outcomes of education such as integration of learnings and application of principles. However, this is central to the problem that marks create. Because the teacher has great difficulty in developing precise or discretely measurable kinds of learnings related to a broader concept of education he will have a tendency to steer away from the broader elements of the learning experience. If it is too difficult to measure it, he won't teach it. It is a matter of neglecting the more important outcomes of education which cannot be evaluated so superficially.

Students soon learn that there are a number of possible ways to evade the substance of accomplishment in class in favor of reaching a higher mark. For example, students will consciously or unconsciously study the teacher in terms of the kinds of things she might value or ask on examinations. There seems little argument that the emphasis given to marks by most teachers in most schools tends ultimately to convince the student that the mark rather than what it is supposed to represent, is the most important outcome of learning. Wrinkle (113:49) comments, "Although other factors enter in there is no question but that many students would be willing to sign the following agreement: 'With the understanding that I will be given a full mark of A and full credit at the close of this course, I agree to attend class regularly but to make no effort to learn anything which the course is supposed to teach."

Faunce and Bossing (38:361) show the following relationship between the broadly accepted goals or outcomes of general education on the one hand and the effects or outcomes of symbol marking on the other:

The core class seeks to -	Symbol marking tends to -
1. learn the skills of cooperative planning;	1. encourage competition;
2. learn the skills of self- and group-appraisal;	2. place evaluative responsibilities solely upon the teacher;
3. help students to adjust successfully to their peers;	3. erect barriers between peers;
4. provide a well-rounded learning experience;	4. place undue emphasis on the subject mastery;
5. make evaluations continuously as part of group planning;	5. emphasize terminal evaluation;
6. help students to grow from where they are;	6. force all to meet minimum standards or quit;
7. provide learning experiences deriving from the intrinsic needs and desires of the learner.	7. serve as an extrinsic motivation, thus helping to perpetuate poor teaching.

Assumption No. 10: Marks have little relation to a student's personal-social development.

Some people feel that marks have little to do with a youngster's social development as though they were somehow an independent phenomenon. It is illustrated by the teacher's response when asked about the unfairness of children of unequal ability striving for the A. His response was, "Well, some children should work for and be satisfied with a C or a D." The implication of this answer would seem to be that the C or D would represent success to the student and not in any way affect his feelings about himself and his group.

I think the teacher's answer is a fairly common phenomenon among the profession and particularly among parents. It is indeed serious and tragic that with the emphasis we place on marks as a measure of success somehow at the same time we feel that students will not feel that they have failed if they achieve less than high grades, or that this failure will not seriously impair their future behavior and efforts to learn.

The relationship between grades or marks and a youngster's social development as demonstrated by his classroom behavior would seem to be a very close, intimate one. Dreikurs (35:29) suggests that a competitive spirit in school fosters the idea that one studies mainly to be ahead of others. "As a result," he adds, "a competitive society reveres those who succeed in their self-elevation and fills its mental hospitals and jails with those who gave up." Rasey and Menge (88:36) were previously quoted in terms of their feelings of the importance of the self-image and the damaging effect upon it by classroom marks. Snygg and Combs (101:224) likewise emphasize the importance to a person's self-concept of being rather systematically and effectively convinced that he is inadequate and incompetent through the process of school marking.

It is not difficult to see the consequences to students who consistently get less than high or average marks. Sarason (96:265) points out that on occasion students who tend to be bright but highly anxious and get A's can be overlooked by teachers in terms of their personal adequacy. He says, "If a bright, highly motivated, child is clearly adequate to his class work, it is difficult for his teacher to believe that this child may be highly anxious about his abilities in his classroom work." McKeachie (72:1120) suggests the probability of low grades producing different effects upon different students. He reports a study which found that frustration produced deterioration in performance for subjects showing "interference tendencies" but produced improved performance for those with low interference tendencies. In other words, students who have low tolerance for frustration showed marked deterioration in performance compared to students who had high tolerance for frustration. In the same article the author reports on another study showing the striking difference between the behavior of a student motivated by fear and one motivated by hope.

The faulty logic used in this assumption involves the most fundamental part of the problem of school marks. Marks are frequently imbued with enormous drawing power. This alleged powerful incentive for students to succeed is held before them as virtually the only way they can satisfactorily give evidence of meeting the demands of the school. It is quite obvious then that youngsters who cannot show such evidence will adjudge themselves as personal failures, not just rating low in a particular school subject. The consequences of being a personal failure involve the full range of behavior deviancy including the probability, in some cases, of using low marks as an act of rebellion against the school. As logical as the relationship might seem, the tragedy is our general unwillingness to examine this part of the problem of school failure.

It may be true, as others have pointed out, that the school dropout rate is no higher than it has ever been. However, the writer will submit that today's dropout is a very different customer than that of yesteryear. In many instances he has been more efficiently "pushed out" than his predecessor. The intensely competitive climate in which few truly succeed has this highly predictable result on the personal-social behavior of many youngsters.

SECTION VII

Summary and Conclusions

An attempt has been made to explore the various dimensions of school marks and marking systems. Since it is not possible to separate marks and grading from the more important and larger process of evaluation it is necessary to discuss the other aspects of evaluation such as the various reporting procedures and the means of collecting and making assessments of pupil growth. As possible alternatives to the practice of using comparative marks are considered it is inescapable that one deal with all phases of evaluation. It is with this in mind then that an attempt will be made to draw some conclusions from what has been said.

It would be easy at this point to conclude that marks should be abolished. And how would one reach that conclusion? Perhaps a summary statement from research and from the literature might be of assistance.

Marks do not have universal common meaning. They can only be interpreted with reference to a myriad of factors affecting their determination. "Only the teacher who gave them knows" should be axiomatic at this point. It is true that marks can motivate learning and behavior in some circumstances with a small segment of children who see a chance for success, but at what cost? Dropouts? Incompetent or inadequate failures? Socially intolerable or passive behavior? And as Sarason (96:255) has pointed out even those who succeed, frequently do so at a very high cost to themselves in terms of the great anxiety they incur in order to maintain their "favored" position. Marks have relatively little usefulness as guidance tools in that they are very generalized statements intended to represent highly complex, specific pictures of human behavior. And there seems little argument that marks have reached the point where indeed they are a means to an end and in fact do represent, and have substituted for, the broader outcomes of education. And it seems almost irrefutable that all kinds of deviant behavior can result from the varying marking practices in the schools. Of course we will undoubtedly continue to use them because they are used and will continue to be used for admission criteria by college admission officers when, even here, perhaps the cost outweighs the benefit.

One might come to the conclusion that the profession would be overwhelmingly against the use of the competitive symbol marking system. Particularly if achievement of pupil growth is represented by a single symbol. Even in the case of the so-called dual marking system, where one symbol represents accomplishment in relation to ability and the other represents standing or rank in the class, all of the aforementioned disadvantages still apply. Of course it is exceedingly difficult even to discuss the possibility of abolishing such well-entrenched cultural symbols which have become as important a part of our American life as the hotdog and apple pie. To suggest such abolition presupposes alternatives which are designed to serve the basic purposes marks are intended to serve.

What then can be done to at least soften the inevitable damage school marks cause? To answer this question, let us first turn back to the important phase of educational experience to which school marks are so closely related. That is the process of evaluation. Evaluating pupil progress is a continuous part of a student's school experience. It serves the ends of education in several important respects. It enables a youngster to define the goals of school in terms of his own unique talents, interests, and experiences. It suggests the kinds of experience which he, his parents, and his teachers will find appropriate for him to reach those goals. It suggests the manner and the means of determining how well he is using these experiences in order to attain the goals. Through this feedback it enables him to set future goals. And finally it continues to enhance his self-development through continuously satisfying accomplishments which gradually build up his picture of who he is and what he wishes to become. It seems apparent that competitive school marks, with the disadvantages and limitations which have been expressed both through authoritative statements and research, make relatively little contribution to this important task of guidance.

If indeed, marks do make little contribution to the process of evaluating pupil progress what modifications in school practice would be necessary to take their place? One such major modification is that of the ungraded or non-graded school. This plan obviously will enable students to fulfill their potentialities most adequately according to the stated elements of evaluation. It is also important to recognize that in the non-graded plan of organization there is an emphasis on continuous progress which is an emphasis on one's own unique abilities and one's own unique rate of learning. Under this organization comparative markings of course make very little sense. Those districts which have participated in such a non-graded plan of organization apparently have had considerable degrees of success.

Goodlad (43:106), the outstanding exponent of this plan, suggests that there should be measurement of a child's progress in relation to (1) a comparison of present skill with the level of skill previously practiced by the individual in question, (2) the relation of this skill to his other important skill developments, and (3) the degree of adequacy necessary for the performance of these tasks. He goes on, "Whenever it is possible for a teacher to describe a child's present skill level in terms of these three dimensions, whether in social studies or in any other curriculum area, then comparisons with the forms of other children assume lesser importance even though they may be of some interest."

If we focus on the elements of the process of evaluation stated above, we can see certain possibilities which will enable a student to experience feedback in that process in place of the typical competitive mark. In the first place, if the general educational goals of the school are developed with the students in terms of their own specific needs then they will have more meaning to them in the learning experience and will be more easily assessed in terms of each individual's accomplishments. For example, schools and teachers who make use of such classification of educational objectives in terms of their own subject content as shown in the Taxonomy of Educational Objectives, developed by Bloom and others (15) will find that they will be assisting students toward much more valuable and broader outcomes in the educational experience.

A simpler but equally valuable classification entitled "Performance Indicating Different Levels of Understanding of a Given Subject" has been developed by Bradfield and Moredock. (18:204)

Of course the devices and instruments used by both the teacher and his students will be important in assessing the meaningful specifics of the educational experience. A number of schools both elementary and secondary have experimented rather successfully in using a variety of checklists and rating scales whereby individual youngsters with the assistance of teachers may make assessments of their own growth. The plan used in the elementary grades at the Shippensburg State College Training School, mentioned herein on page 24, followed this same procedure in relating the measuring and reporting instrument directly to the stated curriculum objectives of the school experience. Assessment devices such as these, which get at the specific strengths and weaknesses of pupil progress, will have much greater meaning than generalized marks in terms of the youngster's ability to see the areas in which he needs further work. This kind of self-evaluation which many agree is an important but tragically underemphasized aspect of the educational experience, has great possibilities not just in relation to the youngster's own classroom experience but in relation to his cooperative and mutual sharing of growth with his parents in the form of reporting.

Schwartz and Tiedeman (98:408-411) propose a similar form and procedure for use at the high school level.

The authors of Perceiving, Behaving, Becoming (1:135) feel that this very process of self-evaluation is being denied many students. They feel that this is the most important aspect of the total process of teacher-pupil planning and the teaching-learning process. "Self-evaluation both completes and begins a cycle of learning: Planning, work, evaluation. Failure to involve a person in evaluation robs him of much of the excitement of learning."

Liggett (68) suggests the following marking and reporting practices:

"1. The objectives of education should be stated in terms of behavior outcomes--what the learner should do rather than what the learner should know.

2. The evaluation and reporting of student progress should be based on his achievement of the objectives of education stated in terms of behavior and outcomes.

3. Evaluation should be based on a comparison of the student with the theoretical normal student of similar age and school learning.

4. A single letter, grade, or symbol is not an adequate index to match the student's achievement unless the achievement evaluated represents a single outcome.

5. Methods of evaluation and reporting should encourage the students

to think of education as desirable ranges in behavior rather than something possessed by the student after the completion of so many required credits.

6. The elimination of school marks is desirable in part because it would compel teachers to depend more on intrinsic motivation, worthwhile materials, and sound methods of instruction.

7. A program for evaluation and measurement should provide for the cooperative efforts of parents and students in developing and participating in the evaluation process.

8. Methods of evaluating and reporting should be based on multiple standards rather than on a single standard of achievement.

9. Better methods of evaluating, recording, and reporting pupil progress depends to a large extent on the changes in curriculum and teaching methods devised for practical application of modern educational objectives."

Bohlmeier (16) offers the following suggestions which might guide the local school district in developing or revising its marking system:

"1. A marking and reporting system should be in harmony with the philosophy of education held by the school for which the reporting system is to be used. Before one adopts a progressive kind of individualized system in a district which has a traditional philosophy, an attempt should be made to alter the philosophy or at least convince the public of the need for a new philosophy.

2. The marking and reporting system should be designed and utilized primarily for the purpose of benefiting the pupil rather than the teacher. Too often teachers employ the report card as a means of rewarding or penalizing pupils.

3. The marking and reporting system should be sufficiently analytical to be both meaningful and informative to pupils, parents, and counselors.

4. The number and nature of the factors to be marked should bear a relationship to objectives which are considered germane to the school experiences.

5. Each factor on the appraisal report should be marked with symbols which are immediately meaningful to all persons who have occasion to review the report. One possible alternative to the typical letters or numbers in conveying school accomplishment is to use broader categories such as 'very high,' 'high,' 'average,' 'low,' and 'very low.'

6. The frequency of preparing reports and submitting them to the home should be determined on the basis of relative values. Obviously the more detailed reports are, the less frequently teachers can prepare them because of the time involved.

7. The manner in which the appraisal reports are submitted to the parents should be determined by the relative importance of economy and the assurance that they reach their intended designation.

8. The appraisal reports may be used to compute whatever final marks are required but not to revive the antiquated principle of competition. [The report used by the author in the Jackson Public Schools is an attempt to play down competition where he uses the same report for each class as formerly mentioned, with 'very high,' 'high,' 'average,' 'low,' and 'very low' designations. One of the five designations is then assigned for each subject: achievement on tests, quality of recitation, quality of completed assignments, promptness in completing work, persistance for mastery, and attention to class activities.]

9. A marking and reporting system should be developed democratically with the cooperative participation of the persons concerned. One person should be responsible for the cooperative effort in the development of a system. A committee that is going to study the revision of the reporting system should involve the teachers, the administrators, as well as the parents and even the students in the school.

10. The marking and reporting system should be evaluated continuously and modified when deemed desirable in accordance with the same democratic principles by which it was originally designed."

The most significant part of this report by Bohlmeier (16) is that it concerns a high school that has apparently successfully eliminated a single symbol for a given subject and instead uses degrees of judgment such as very low to very high on a number of factors; some academic--others attitudinal. These levels of performance are not indications of class standing. Instead they are indications of standing in relation to pupil-parent-teacher mutually defined goals.

The results of a parent survey done by Wetmore[*] indicated a strong preference for the following: judging their child's achievement by his ability to achieve and by comparing it to the progress he has made since the last period; how much effort their child is expending; how their child behaves; and parent-teacher conferences. They showed least preference for a comparison of their children's achievement with that of other children. However, they preferred to stick with a competitive five-point letter scale. This seems to represent a direct contradiction in values concerning the process and nature of reporting progress. On the one hand they value individual ability and individual progress as a standard for comparison but on the other elect to use a symbolic scale which tends to violate these principles.

---

[*] Joseph Wetmore, "What Parents Want to Know," Exchange XIII, November-December 1954, p. 9.

This apparent paradox is probably fairly typical among parents and would seem to indicate that if parents were adequately informed concerning the results and consequences of the various cards and marks employed they would tend to move away from what Wetmore[1] calls the "antiquated and damaging old traditional method of symbol marks in reporting the progress of their children."

Schwartz and Tiedeman (98:403-412) suggest that teachers who must continue to use a traditional reporting system can improve their practices by engaging in a self-study project in cooperation with administrators, parents, and students. They propose the following principles to guide such a study:

"1. A report card is only one element in a complete reporting system that also includes letters, cards, conferences, and rating scales.

2. Precisely identify classroom objectives so that student growth can be evaluated as progress toward clearly defined goals.

3. Assign weights to objectives so that the various classroom activities are kept in their proper perspective. Not all the things done in a classroom are of equal importance nor do they deserve equal weight.

4. Maintain a folder for each student containing illustrative samples of student behavior and performance.

5. Help students understand what the report card is and the basis upon which the evaluation is made.

6. Supplement a letter or numerical grade with comments and special parent and/or student conferences.

7. Offer students ample opportunities to engage in the process of self-appraisal.

---

[1] op. cit., page 57.

8. Prepare a supplementary report card that can be used exclusively for the individual classroom. A given classroom teacher who wishes to improve his reporting practices could develop a report card more adapted to his own classroom and his unique needs."

Regardless of the particular system used, even though it may have been developed with the participation and approval of parents, teachers, and students, certain fundamental value shifts must occur to make it work. For example, studies have shown that when a system is changed from a competitive to an individualized basis for marks, teachers still tend to mark students comparatively by rank ordering their grades. (48) A change in the policy does not guarantee a change in practice.

In the final analysis the adequacy of a system of evaluating pupil progress will be determined by the extent to which it can assist students to attain the major goals of their educational experience. Although educational authorities and the public may differ in the various academic objectives they hold for the school many agree that each student must attain a sufficient degree of personal identity to enable him to make accurate and wise choices in his educational and occupational future. To reach such awareness of self it is clear that a student must gradually but continuously be involved in not only seeing his own progress in relation to his past and to his future, but seeing it also in relation to the progress of other students, of which he is acutely aware. Otto[1], for example, found parents highly receptive to an evaluating system which compared their youngster's growth to their ability, but still felt inadequately informed of where they stood in relation to others. The latter information is vitally necessary if self-identity is to be realized. The continuing development of programs of student self-evaluation will promote this goal. The earliest grades in school are not too early to involve the students in this process. A logical next step for the highly successful parent-teacher conference is to routinely include the students in these evaluation proceedings. Schools must recognize, however, that this exposure to the reality of one's own talents and abilities in comparison to others (is vitally necessary as it is in dealing with what is unique and specific about learning) can become the same traditional weapon against students it has been in the past. The one serious error made in our past efforts to individualize marking and reporting was to unwittingly downgrade--almost entirely in some instances--the reality of comparisons. Our intentions were necessary and sincere in protecting students from the threat of invidious comparisons with others. However, it is not the comparison itself which wreaks the harm but the purpose it is designed to serve. Comparisons are a fact of life and students are acutely aware of them. If their purpose is to awaken in students a richer, fuller awareness of themselves to permit more realistic assessments of growth and future choices in life, but managed by an equalitarian classroom climate which respects the contribution and dignity of uniqueness and difference, then they can be quite beneficial.

---

[1] H. J. Otto and others, Four Methods of Reporting to Parents, Bureau of Laboratory Schools, Publication No. 7, University of Texas, 1957.

The underlying principle, then, which must be observed is that the evaluation system must not set one student against another and must not hold the exclusive goal of academic accomplishment (or what can often be merely self-elevation) at any cost. In far too many instances students may obtain a diploma, certifying courses, marks and years of schooling, but in the process may have missed an education.

Thelen[1] uses the following excerpt to illustrate the limitation we often place on students by the manner in which we observe their progress:

"John H. Watson, M.D., wrote what may well be the longest and the most complete case study on record. His subject was Sherlock Holmes, the detective. In A Study in Scarlet, Watson attempts--after some weeks of acquaintance--to assess Holmes and he writes out a report card in the best achievement tradition.

He certifies Holmes' knowledge of literature, philosophy, and astronomy to be nil; politics, feeble; botany, strong on poisons but weak on practical gardening; geology, recognizes mud stains from various parts of London; chemistry, profound; sensational literature, knows every detail of every horror perpetrated in the last century; anatomy, accurate but unsystematic; good violinist; expert amateur athlete; good practical knowledge of British law. And Watson, with rare insight into his own evaluative processes, labels the report card, 'Sherlock Holmes--his limits' (italics mine).

---

[1] Herbert A. Thelen, "The Triumph of Achievement over Inquiry in Education," The Elementary School Journal, Vol. 60, No. 4, January 1960, pp. 196-197.

But with all this observation--which is quite accurate--Watson misses the essence of Holmes and Sherlock has to tell him, finally, what his powers and abilities are and what social role organizes these powers and abilities into an effective personality and contributor to society.

What Watson missed, because he had never seen Holmes perform in an appropriate situation, was his intuition for unraveling crimes, his ability to apply special knowledge to problems, his conscious use of rules of deduction, his habit of observation. And the report card could never have led Watson to predict Holmes' role of 'consulting detective.'

Watson, I am afraid, embodies the achievement point of view in our schools. He represents the traditional, academic, propaedeutic view of education which asks after achievement in its own categories but fails to comprehend--and therefore to educate--the child.

Sherlock is unique, as human personality is unique. And he represents that part of every man which must be understood within its own frame of reference and commitments. The categories useful for understanding Sherlock are not the categories most useful for understanding Watson.

Watson talks about his own education in language that is typical of certification and achievement. He 'took his degree' and proceeded to go 'through the course prescribed for surgeons.'

Holmes never talks about his education. He does talk about problems to be solved, inquiries to be conducted, and methods of thought that he values. For the most part, Holmes educated himself. His studies were 'very desultory and eccentric, but he...amassed a lot of out-of-the-way knowledge which would astonish his professors.' And the habit of inquiry--which the university could not stamp out--survived!

Can we say as much for our pupils?"

TWB:mc
#35020
8-16-66

Los Angeles County Superintendent of Schools
Division of Research and Guidance

"PUPIL MARKS" BIBLIOGRAPHY

1. ASCD 1962 Yearbook Committee, Arthur W. Combs, Chairman. Perceiving, Behaving, Becoming, A New Focus for Education. Washington, D.C.: Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development, 1962.

2. Adams, Herbert. "Are There Better Ways of Evaluating, Recording, and Reporting Pupil Progress in the Junior and Senior High Schools?", Bulletin of the National Association of Secondary School Principals, March 1950. 34:73-79.

3. Adamson, James H. "What are Defensible Bases for Promotion and Non-promotion of Students?", Bulletin of the National Association of Secondary School Principals, April 1959, 43:56-58.

4. Ahman, J., Stanley and Marvin D. Glock, Evaluating Pupil Growth. Boston: Allyn and Bacon, 1958. Chapter 17, 530-567.

5. Alphren, Morton. "A Fair Grading System," Clearing House, October 1960,35:113-14.

6. Atkinson, J. W. and G. H. Litwin, "Achievement Motive and Test Anxiety Conceived as Motive to Approach Success and Motive to Avoid Failure," Journal of Abnormal and Social Psychology, 1960. 60:52-63.

7. Atkinson, S. B., O. T. Freeman, and Eugene S. Wilson, "To Rank or Not to Rank--A Symposium." National Education Association Journal, May 1960. 49:26-27.

8. Baker, Robert L. and Roy Doyle, "Elementary School Marking Practices and Subsequent High School Achievement," Educational Administration and Supervision, May 1958. 44:158-166.

9. __________. "A Change in Marking Procedures and Scholastic Achievement," Educational Administration and Supervision, April 1957. 43:223-232.

10. Barnes, Katherine F. and E. H. Barnes, "A Realistic Approach to In-Service Education," Clearing House, April 1962. 36:476-478.

11. Battle, Haron J., "An Application of Inverted Analysis and Study of the Relation Between Values and Achievement of High School Pupils," Unpublished Doctoral Dissertation, Department of Education, University of Chicago, 1954.

12. Benezet, Louis T., "Some Minority Thoughts on Standards." An address presented at the 17th Annual National Teacher Educational and Professional Standards Conference, National Education Association, Fort Collins, Colorado, June 29, 1962.

13. Bennett, Kenneth B., "Student Evaluation--the New Way," Industrial Arts and Vocational Education, December 1958. 47:300-302.

14. Bernard, Sister John (O.S.B.). "Marking: Bane or Blessing?", Research Study for Educational Research and Development Council of the Twin Cities Metropolitan Area, Inc., University of Minnesota, 1965 (pp. 8-11).

15. Bloom, Benjamin S.,(Editor) Taxonomy of Educational Objectives. New York: Longmans, Green and Co. 1954.

16. Bohlmeier, Edward C., "Principles Pertaining to Marking and Reporting Procedures," School Review, January 1951. 59:15-24.

17. Bostrom, John, W. Vlandis, and Milton Rosenbaum, "Grades as Reinforcing Contingencies and Attitude Change," Journal of Educational Psychology, May 1961. 52:112-115.

18. Bradfield, James M., and H. S. Moredock. Measurement and Evaluation in Education, New York: The Macmillan Co., 1957.

19. Brooks, A.F., "Reporting Pupil Progress to Parents," Bulletin of National Association of Secondary School Principals, May 1961.

20. Burton, William H., The Guidance of Learning Activities, New York: D. Appleton-Century Company. 1962.

21. Bush, Robert N., "The Grading System and Higher Levels of Excellence," Journal of Secondary Education, February 1961. 36:65-67.

22. Cagle, Dan F., "How May we Make the Evaluation and Reporting of Student Achievement More Meaningful?", Bulletin of the National Association of Secondary School Principals, April 1955. 39:24-27.

23. California State Department of Education, "Reporting Pupil Progress" (Chapter VIII), Evaluating Pupil Progress. Sacramento, California: Bulletin of California State Department of Education, Volume XXIX, No. 14, 1960.

24. California Teachers Association, "Survey of High School Grading Policies," Education News Service, Burlingame, California, June 1965.

25. Casey, John E., "Evaluating Pupils in Terms of Improvement," School and Society, June 7, 1958. 86:263-265.

26. Caudle, James B., "A Lingering Problem: Educators Look at Grading," Texas Outlook, July 1961. XLV:13.

27. Chansky, Norman M., "X-Ray of the School Mark," Educational Forum, March 1962. 26:347-352.

28. Conley, William H., "Grades: Currency of the Realm," Catholic School Journal, January 1962. 62:4.

29. Cummings, Robert E., "Evaluating and Grading," Education, March 1962. 82:403-405.

30. Cuony, E. R., "Student-Parent-Teacher Conferences," Bulletin of National Association of Secondary School Principals, February 1957. 41:180-187.

31. Deitz, Patricia., "An Oral Performance Rating Sheet," French Review, October 1961. 35:54-58.

32. Deutsch, M., "An Experimental Study of the Effects of Cooperation and Competition upon Group Processes," Human Relations, 1949. 2:199-232.

33. DeVita, Joseph C., "No Homework...No Report Card Grades...Ungraded," Bulletin of the National Association of Secondary School Principals, October, 1961.

34. Doak, E. A., "Grading: A Deterrent to Learning," Clearing House, December 1962. 37:245-248.

35. Dreikurs, Rudolf., Encouraging Children to Learn - The Encouragement Process, Englewood Cliffs: Prentice-Hall, 1963.

36. Eastep, Chester S., "Elimination of Competition," Pennsylvania School Journal, November 1961. p. 99.

37. Eisman, Edward, "The Bassett Continuous Progress High School," Audio-Visual Instruction, May 1963.

38. Faunce, Roland C., and Nelson L. Bossing, Developing the Core Curriculum, Enclewood Cliffs: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1958.

39. Faunce, Roland C., and Morrel J. Clute., Teaching and Learning in the Junior High School, San Francisco: Wadsworth Publishing Company, Inc., 1961.264-67.

40. Fine, Benjamin., "A, B, C, of Grading Puzzles Parents," New York Times Magazine, November 18, 1957.

41. Fromm, Erich, The Art of Loving, New York: Harper and Brothers, 1956.

42. Girvetz, Harry K., From Wealth to Welfare, Stanford, California: Stanford University Press, 1950.

43. Goodlad, John I., and Robert H. Anderson, The Nongraded Elementary School (Revised Edition)., New York: Harcourt, Brace and World, Inc., 1963.

44. Grace, Harry A., "The Meanings of Grades," Peabody Journal of Education, September 1959. 37:93-95.

45. Greer, Edith S., Pupil Marks and School Marking Systems: A Selected Bibliography, U. S. Government Printing Office, 1963.

46. Hadley, S. Trevor, "School Mark--Fact or Fancy," Educational Administration and Supervision, May 1954. 40:305-312.

47. Haines, D. B., "Cooperative vs. Competitive Discussion Methods in Teaching Introductory Psychology," Unpublished Doctoral Dissertation, University of Michigan, 1959.

48. Halliwell, Joseph W., "The Relationship of Certain Factors to Marking Practices in Individualized Reporting Programs," Journal of Educational Research, October 1960. 54:76-78.

49. Hanson, Earl H., "What is Success and How Shall we Report to Parents?", Education, October 1961. 82:126.

50. Heltzel, Frances Butt, "A Level of Aspiration Approach to a Study of the Differential Effects of Evaluation," an Unpublished Doctoral Dissertation, Cornell University, 1963.

51. Herskovits, Melville J., The Economic Life of Primitive People, New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1940.

52. Hoffman, James D. and W. E. Engbretson, "The Children Want to be There," Childhood Education, March 1959. 35:303-305.

53. Hoggard, J. Kendall, "Grading the Accelerated Student," Education, January 1963, 85:286-288.

54. Hosmanek, John and Otto F. Huettner, "The ABC of Grading," Bulletin of the National Association of Secondary School Principals, February 1961. 45:115-116.

55. Hunter, Donald B., "Can't We Do Something About Grades?", Kentucky School Journal, April 1960. 38:22-31.

56. Jansen, Udo H., "Educators Look at Grading--A Survey of Systems," The Texas Outlook, July 1961. 45:15

57. Jones, John A., "Grading, Marking, and Reporting in the Modern Elementary School," Educational Forum, November 1954. 19:45-54.

58. Johnson, Mauritz, Jr., "Solving the Mess in Marks," Education Digest, February 1962. 27:12-14.

59. Johnson, Richard R., "Better Ways of Measuring and Reporting Student Achievement" Bulletin of the National Association of Secondary School Principals, September, 1962. 46:94-97.

60. Kalin, Robert, "Some Comments on Grading Procedures," Mathematics Teacher, April 1959, 52:302-306.

61. Keller, Art H., "What are Your Standards for Grading?", School and Community, May 1959, 45:16.

62. Keller, Irvin A., "A More Comprehensive and Significant Marking System," Bulletin of the National Association of Secondary School Principals, January 1952. 36:70-78.

63. Kingsley, Howard H., "Communication Between the School and Home: A Study of Teacher-Pupil-Parent Reaction to a Variety of Reporting Procedures and Techniques," Unpublished Doctoral Dissertation, School of Education, Boston University, 1959.

64. Kirkendall, Lester A., "Can Definitions of 'Moral' and "Immoral' Apply to the Classroom," Teacher's Letter, May 15, 1964. Vol. 13, No. 17.

65. Klausmeier, Herbert J., "Grading, Reporting, and Public Relations," High School Journal, January 1957. 40:146-151.

66. Knapp, Wallace R., "Thoughts on the Philosophy of Rating," High Points, June 1958. 40:51-53.

67. Leese, Joseph, "Mess in Marks," New York State Education, May 1961. 48:9-11.

68. Liggitt, William A., "Are There Better Ways of Evaluating, Recording, and Reporting Pupil Progress in the Junior and Senior High Schools?," Bulletin of the National Association of Secondary School Principals, March 1950. 34:79-89.

69. Ludeman, W. W., "Overhauling School Evaluation," American School Board Journal, February 1960. 140:37.

70. McCandless, Boyd R., "Evaluating Curriculum Mastery; from the Book Children and Adolescents: Behavior and Development," School and Society, March 25, 1961, 89:158-160.

71. McEachen, Howard D., "Status and Trends in Organization in Curriculum in Selected Junior High Schools," Unpublished Doctoral Dissertation, University of Kansas, 1955.

72. McKeachie, W. J., "Research on Teaching at the College and University Level," Chapter 23 in Handbook of Research in Teaching, The American Educational Research Association, Chicago: Rand, McNally, 1963.

73. McNally, H. J., "Report Card Report," National Education Association Journal, September 1955. 44:350-351.

74. Manoil, Adolph, "Appraisal in Education," Boston University Journal of Education, October 1963, Vol. 146.

75. March, Leland S., "Down with Report Card Blues," Clearing House, January 1959. 33:266-270.

76. Marshall, Mariann, "Self-evaluation in Seventh Grade," The Elementary School Journal, February 1960. 60:249-252.

77. Mehlman, Maurice, et al, "The Rating of Pupils--A Mystery or A Marking System?" High Points, February 1958. 40:76-79.

78. Michael, Kenneth E., "What are Some New Trends in Reporting Student Growth and Achievement to Parents?", Bulletin of the National Association of Secondary School Principals, April 1960. 44:147-419.

79. Moskowits, Samuel D., "Guide Lines for Marking Procedures," High Points, April 1962. 44:26-30.

80. Muessig, Raymond H., "How Do I Grade Thee? Let Me Count the Ways," *Clearing House*, March 1962. 36:414-416.

81. __________, The Mystery of Grading and Reporting," *Education*, October 1962. 83:90-93.

82. National Education Association, Research Division, "Reports on Pupil Progress and Elementary School Promotion Polices," *NEA Research Memo*. Washington, D.C.: National Education Association, 1960.

83. Noll, Victor H., "To: Teachers, Subject: Marking," *Michigan Education Journal*, September 1959. 37:16.

84. Page, Alexander, "To Grade or Retrograde," *College English*, January 1960. 21:213-216.

85. Palmer, Orville, "Seven Classic Ways of Grading Dishonestly," *The English Journal*, October 1962. 51:464-467.

86. Phillips, M. F., "Two Practical Questions Involving Grading Papers," *Clearing House*, December 1961. 36:237-239.

87. Poppel, William., "Reflections on the Rating of Pupils: A Mystery or A Marking System," *High Points*, January 1959. 41:63-65.

88. Rasey, Marie I. and J. Wilmer Menge, *What We Learn From Children*, New York: Harper and Brothers, 1955.

89. Reed, Harold J., "The Self in a School Setting," Los Angeles County Schools, Division of Research and Guidance, *Research Report Number 3*. March 1962.

90. Ristow, L. W., "Trends in School Reporting Practices," Unpublished Memo, Los Angeles County Schools, Division of Research and Guidance, October 1956.

91. Roelfs, R. M. "Trends in Junior High School Reporting," *Journal of Educational Research*, December 1955.

92. Rose, Guy M., "Analyzing the Distribution of Class Marks," *Journal of Secondary Education*, February 1961. 36:83-88.

93. Rothney, John W. "Evaluating and Reporting Pupil Progress," *What Research Says to the Teacher*, Number 7. Washington, D.C.: Nationsl Education Association, 1955.

94. Russell, Ivan L. and Wellington A. Thalman, "Personality: Does it Influence Teachers' Marks?", Journal of Educational Research, April 1955. 48:561-564.

95. Russell, James W., "Mark of the Best," *Bulletin of the National Association of Secondary School Principals*, February 1961. 45:112-114.

96. Sarason, Seymour B., et al, *Anxiety in Elementary School Children, A Report of Research*. New York: John Wiley and Sons, 1960.

97. Schindler, Saul, "They Also Deserve Who--," *High Points*, March 1959. 41:40-43.

98. Schwartz, Alfred and Stewart C. Tiedeman, *Evaluating Student Progress in a Secondary School*, New York: Longmans, Green and Co. 1957.

99. Smith, Ann A. and John E. Dobbin, "Marks and Marking Systems," *Encyclopedia of Educational Research*. New York: 1960, pp. 783-789.

100. Smith, Lehi T., "Everyone Gets Promoted," *Overview*, January 1963. 4:44-45.

101. Snygg, D. and A. W. Combs, *Individual Behavior*. New York: Harper, 1949; Rev. Edition, 1959.

102. Starch, D. and E. C. Elliott, "Reliability of Grading," School Review, 1912. 20:422-457.

103. Stockdale, Guy A., "A Teacher Answers the Question--How Shall We Grade?," Agricultural Education Magazine, May 1958. 30:251.

104. Strang, Ruth M., "Reporting Pupil Progress," School Executive, August 1953. 72:47-50.

105. Teaf, H. M., "Grades, Their Dominion is Challenged," Journal of Higher Education, February 1964. 35:87-88.

106. Themmes, Lawrence., "Ability Marking Simplified," Industrial Arts and Vocational Education, September 1958. 47:217-219.

107. Trytten, John M., "Parents Like the Conference Plan," Bulletin of the Michigan Secondary School Association, March 1952. 16:18.

108. Wagner, Guy W., "What Schools are Doing--Reporting Pupil Progress," Education, February 1960. 80:381.

109. Waterhouse, I. K. and I. L. Child, "Frustration and the Quality of Performance," Journal of Personnel, 1953. 21:298-311.

110. Weber, Alan G., "Three Track Grading," The Texas Outlook, July 1961. 45:12-13.

111. Wigham, E. L., "What Should Report Cards Report?," School Executive, May 1958. 77:21-23.

112. Williams, Robert G., "The Bassett High School--A New Frontier in Secondary Education," Unpublished Paper, Bassett Unified School District, LaPuente, California, May 1962.

113. Wrinkle, William L., Improving Marking and Reporting Practices in the Elementary and Secondary Schools. New York: Rhinehart and Company, Inc., 1947. 120 p.

114. Yauch, Wilbur A., "What Research Says About--School Marks and their Reporting," National Education Association Journal, May 1961. 50:50+

TWB:mc
#34343
1-20-66